



# Climate Pastoral Care Conference - 2020 -

Christian training in Care, Communication & Action

# PROGRAM





# Introduction

## History and Development of the Conference

In May 2019, Uniting Earth organised the inaugural Climate Pastoral Care Training Day at the Uniting Church Centre for Ministry in Parramatta NSW.

This event brought together psychological, climate science and pastoral care expertise for addressing climate mental health in a way that had never been done before in Australia.

The conference was inspired by my own experiences of climate anxiety, and the increasing number of examples I was hearing from church friends and contacts. After over a decade of working with ecologically aware churches taking climate change seriously, and interacting with people around the issue, I had become increasingly concerned. Talking with Byron Smith about people's psychological responses to climate change, it became really obvious to us both that this problem was only going to grow; and that psychological expertise could have a lot to offer us in thinking about how we could help people through this in churches, and how we should be talking about climate change to our various audiences.

The 2019 event was very successful in raising awareness of the impact of climate anxiety and other climate related mental health issues in our church and wider community, and the challenges of providing pastoral care to sufferers. It was also successful in connecting leading psychologists and experts working in this field, and allowing information sharing. Therefore, the decision was made to hold a larger ecumenical conference in 2020. In addition to climate pastoral care, this broader event would also include training focused on how best to communicate around climate change and what churches can do to take action on climate.

The unprecedented bushfires experienced around Australia, and particularly in NSW & the ACT, over spring and summer 2019/2020 further emphasized the importance of this work, and the idea of climate anxiety became newly concrete for many people as they faced the smoke and other impacts of the fires for themselves.

In June 2020, Common Grace and the Five Leaf Eco-Awards joined Uniting as co-sponsors, and the conference was renamed the 'Climate Pastoral Care Conference: *Christian training in Care, Communication & Action*', to welcome greater ecumenical participation.

We are excited to gather online this year, and for the opportunities this offers for church leaders and interested parties from all around Australia and New Zealand to attend.

We also intend to follow up the conference with a series of online support and discussion groups to help attendees unpack what they have learned. Please let us know if you would like to be included in one of these groups.

We hope you have a fantastic time!

Blessings, Jessica Morthorpe

On behalf of the organisers and our sponsors:

Uniting, Common Grace and the Five Leaf Eco-Awards

## **Program**

This program document outlines the keynote and workshop speakers over the 3 sessions/days. Links for online access will be emailed to those registered.

Our hope is that attendees will participate in all three days of the program, but where that is not possible, there is a particular focus on climate pastoral care and climate communication on the Thursday and Friday, and church climate action on the Saturday, to help people prioritise.

**The main program will run:**

**Thursday 30th July 7pm - 9pm**

**Friday 31st of July 12pm - 6pm**

**Saturday 1st of August 10am - 2pm**

Also included in this program are organisational spotlights, designed to alert you to some of the key organisations working in these areas. Each of these organisations would be an ideal place to start when you are ready to take action following the conference.

*(Note: The page placement of the organisational spotlights is not intended to imply the endorsement of that organisation by the featured speaker)*

***We reserve the right to change this program as necessary for the running of the event.***

# Contents

## Thursday

Bonus Session: 12pm Workshop: Communing with Nature Through a Sit Spot Practice - **Sarah van Erp**

### **Main Program 7pm - 9pm**

Keynote: Bushfires, Chaplaincy and Climate Change – **Stephen Robinson**

Keynote: Deadly Growth: Cancer, COVID-19 and Climate - **Byron Smith**

## Friday

Optional Morning Activities

Bonus session: 10am Workshop: Connecting with Creation - **Ruth Wivell**

### **Main Program 12pm - 6pm**

Virtual Community Lunch

12:45pm Keynote: Why is it so hard to talk about climate change? - **Rebecca Huntley**

### **2pm Workshop Session 1 (choose 1 from the following):**

**Sally Gillespie** - Holding Grief, Honouring Beauty, Healing our World: A reflective workshop on sustaining climate engagement

**Byron Smith** - Emotional barriers to climate action

**Tim Senior** - Climate Change Impacts on Health

3pm Keynote: Responding to children and young people who are experiencing anxiety about our warming world - **Merle Conyer**

### **3:45 Workshop Session 2 (choose 1 from the following):**

**Belinda Noble** - Tailoring Your Climate Messages

**Victoria Walker** - Rethinking Personal Power

**Brooke Prentis** - Hope and Grief in the face of climate inaction: Whiteness and #BlackLivesMatter

**Leah D. Schade** - 'Green' Preaching in the 'Purple Zone': Environmental Sermons in the Red-Blue Divide"

### **5pm Workshop Session 3 (choose 1 from the following):**

**Krystyna Kidson** - 20 minutes and 5 questions: Truly all you need to have a transformative, therapeutic, Spirit-centred, climate-related conversation.

**Cassandra Sundaraja** - Designing Interventions to Address Climate Inaction

**Greg Rolles** - Loving our neighbour in a time of climate chaos

**Kim Loo** - The Coal Face of Climate Change

## Saturday

### **Main Program 10am - 2pm**

10:20am Interview - School Strike 4 Climate and Christian Students Uniting Church Climate Action stories

Sustainable Schools

12:15 Keynote: 250 years of advocacy for Creation and Climate Justice: Learnings from Aboriginal peoples - **Brooke Prentis**

1pm Virtual Community Lunch

# Thursday

## ***Optional Pre-Program Activities:***

Sit Spot Exercise

Download the [Kids and Creation Resource](#)

## ***Bonus Sessions:***

12pm Workshop: Communing  
with Nature Through a Sit Spot Practice -

Sarah van Erp

3pm Workshop: Climate Conversations

Resource Trial

## **Main Program:**

7pm Welcome and Intro

Welcome to Country

Keynote:

Bushfires, Chaplaincy and Climate Change –

Dr. Stephen Robinson

Keynote

Deadly Growth:

Cancer, COVID-19 and Climate - Byron Smith

9pm close





# Sarah van Erp

## WORKSHOP: Communing with Nature Through a Sit Spot Practice

Do you have a place you like to go in nature? Somewhere you can recharge and connect with the natural world? Somewhere you can take your deepest self, your joy, your grief, your peace? Could such a place offer you a mirror to your soul, a mentor to your deepest yearnings? Do you make time in your life to hear what nature has to show and tell you?

In this workshop, Sarah will describe her journey through a seven day sit spot challenge where she sat in nature for one hour each morning. There will be opportunity for you to reflect on your relationship to nature and to learn about a simple sit spot practice that can have a profound impact on your wellbeing and clarity of mind.

### **BIO: Sarah is currently a bush school educator at Centennial Parklands.**

In this role, she leads children and adults through nature connection play, stories, craft and immersion. Sarah studied Environmental Science and worked for twenty years as an Environmental Educator for Local Governments and NGOs in New Zealand, the UK and Australia.

## Organisational Spotlights:

### **Australian Association of Environmental Education**



[www.aaee.org.au/](http://www.aaee.org.au/)

AAEE is Australia's peak professional body for environmental educators. We advocate for environmental education and contribute to skills development to help you stay at the forefront of education for sustainability. We provide a network for the growing force of cross-sector environmental educators across our states and territories.

### **Australian Parents for Climate Action**



[www.ap4ca.org/](http://www.ap4ca.org/)

Australian Parents for Climate Action is the voice for all parents, grandparents, families, and carers of children in Australia to show their deep concern about the impact of climate change on our children's safety and survival, now and into the future.





# Rev. Dr. Stephen Robinson

## KEYNOTE:

### **Bushfires, Chaplaincy and Climate Change**

Stephen will share some of his experiences supporting communities through the unprecedented 2019/2020 bushfire season, and the ongoing impacts these communities are experiencing.

In the light of climate change, and the increasing frequency and intensity of associated natural disasters, how can we ensure we support our communities and help them prepare for the next disaster?

**BIO: Stephen Robinson is the National Disaster Recovery Officer of the Uniting Church. As the Senior Chaplain of the NSW Disaster Recovery Chaplaincy Network (DRCN) he coordinated the chaplaincy response to the bushfire emergencies of 2019/20 across the state.**



Stephen has worked in disaster recovery and emergencies related to the environment and weather for over 20 years, first as a Rural Fire Service chaplain and member, then in full time disaster recovery ministry. Right across Australia and the Pacific he has seen a growing frequency and intensity of disaster events driven by climate change. His particular concern is what we have done to the weather, and what this may mean for us moving into the future in terms of minimising further losses and supporting the care of populations in climate-driven crises into the future.

## Organisational Spotlight:



**NSW Disaster Recovery**  
*Chaplaincy Network*

[www.nswdrcn.org.au/](http://www.nswdrcn.org.au/)

The Disaster Recovery Chaplaincy Network (DRCN) is an ecumenical network of chaplains established to assist people in NSW who have been affected by disasters and major emergencies within their communities.



# Dr. Byron Smith



## **KEYNOTE Deadly Growth: Cancer, COVID-19 and Climate**

Some problems sneak up on us. The first signs may be so insignificant that they are barely noticeable to a casual observer. What can we learn from the current pandemic about the value of (and barriers to) taking early action to address complex problems involving exponential growth?

**BIO: Byron is an ecological ethicist and Christian minister. His PhD in theological ethics focused on emotional responses to climate change in the context of Christian identity.**

He also holds honours degrees in theology, philosophy and literature. His time is split between pastoral ministry at St George's Anglican Church, Paddington, and a speaking/writing ministry helping churches join the dots between ecological justice and faith. He has authored a number of scholarly articles and book chapters, is a climate consultant for Common Grace (an Australian Christian justice movement), writes for a variety of online platforms, hosts a news digest podcast, The Good Dirt, and has joined in nonviolent direct actions against new coal projects and in support of people seeking asylum. Byron lives in Sydney with Jessica and their two young children and loves making soil and honey (or watching worms and bees do so).

## Organisational Spotlight:



**Beauty. Generosity. Justice.**

Join the online movement of 48,665 Australian Christians seeking to live, speak and act more graciously, more compassionately, more like Jesus in today's world.

Common Grace seeks to be a gracious public Christian voice that is both provocative and compassionate, and one that helps to reframe public attitudes toward Christianity.



# Friday

## ***Optional Morning Activities:***

Download the Kids and Creation Resource

## ***Bonus session:***

10am Workshop: Connecting with Creation - Ruth Wivell

## **Main Program:**

12pm Virtual Community Lunch

12:45pm Keynote:

Why is it so hard to talk about climate change?

- Rebecca Huntley

## *2pm Workshop Session 1*

Sally Gillespie - Holding Grief, Honouring Beauty,

Healing our World: A reflective workshop on  
sustaining climate engagement

Byron Smith -

Emotional barriers to climate action

Tim Senior -

Climate Change Impacts on Health

3pm Keynote: Merle Conyer - Responding to children and young people who are  
experiencing anxiety about our warming world

## *3:45 Workshop Session 2*

Belinda Noble - Tailoring Your Climate Messages

Victoria Walker - Rethinking Personal Power

Brooke Prentis - Hope and Grief in the face of climate inaction: Whiteness and  
#BlackLivesMatter

Leah D. Schade - 'Green' Preaching in the 'Purple Zone': Environmental Sermons  
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Truly all you need to have a transformative, therapeutic, Spirit-centred, climate-  
related conversation.

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# Ruth Wivell

## BONUS ACTIVITIES & WORKSHOP Connecting with Creation

Now, more than ever, children need a sense of safety and security. And so do we adults! Feelings of security and safety come not from the absence of danger, but rather from a sense of connection. Children seek this connection with the people in their lives, and also with nature.

The rewards of helping ourselves and our children to build these connections with nature are manifold. As my children have pattered about, befriending beasties, immersing themselves in imaginary play, and naming the plants around them, I have watched them grow in love for their environment. Just as we experience being connected in and with creation, our love for it--and one another--is magnified.

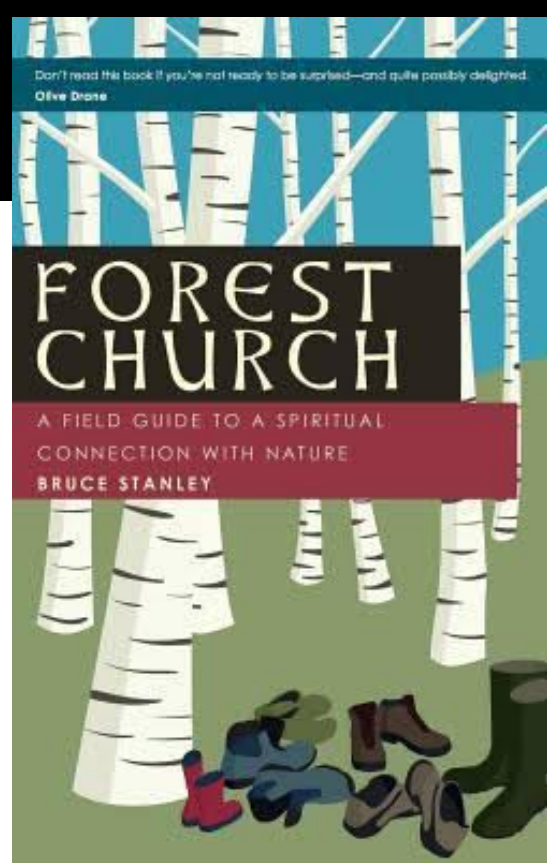
I hope these resources will not just give you ideas of activities to do with your kids, but also some sense of the philosophy behind why it is so important.

**BIO:** I am originally from Aotearoa New Zealand and have lived with my family in the USA, Germany, and Scotland. In 2019 we moved on to country traditionally cared for by the people of the Darug nation. Among other things, I have run community gardens and facilitated programmes helping inner-city children access nature. I have also learned a lot from taking my own children to forest education programmes, like Timbernook and Mud Pies. You can visit my blog to read some of my poetry, sermons, and reflections that circle around many of the ideas in this resource: Slow Growing.

I am passionate about helping people to recognise that they are a part of the natural world--that nature is not something 'out there' or a car trip away, but in us and around us. To me, this is the first step towards learning to love and care for creation.



## Organisational Spotlight:



Forest Church is a contemporary movement, with roots in the long Christian tradition of engagement in nature, such as the Celtic and Franciscan approaches. Those engaged in Forest Church are seeking to meet with God in and through their connection with the natural world. The hope is that Forest Churches will become a spiritual home for those outside the traditional church who relate better to outdoor spirituality than gatherings in a church building.

[www.gloucester.anglican.org/2018/discovering-forest-church/](http://www.gloucester.anglican.org/2018/discovering-forest-church/)





# Dr. Rebecca Huntley

## KEYNOTE:

### Why is it so hard to talk about climate change?

While scientists double down on the shocking figures, we still find ourselves unable to discuss climate change meaningfully among friends and neighbours - or even to grapple with it ourselves. The key to progress on climate change is in the psychology of human attitudes and our ability to change. Whether you're already alarmed and engaged with the issue, concerned but disengaged, a passive skeptic or an active denier, understanding our emotional reactions to climate change - why it makes us anxious, fearful, angry or detached - is critical to coping on an individual level and convincing each other to act. This talk is about understanding why people who aren't like you feel the way they do and learning to talk to them effectively. What we need are thousands - millions - of everyday conversations about the climate to enlarge the ranks of the concerned, engage the disengaged and persuade the cautious of the need for action. Faith organisations are an essential part of achieving this.

## BIO: Rebecca Huntley is one of Australia's most experienced social researchers.

She is the former director of The Mind and Mood Report, the longest running measure of the nation's attitudes and trends. She holds degrees in law and film studies and a PhD in gender studies, and is a mum to three young children. It was realising she is part of the problem older generation that caused her change of heart and to dedicate herself to researching our attitudes to climate change. She is a member of Al Gore's Climate Reality Corps, carries out social research for NGOs such as The Wilderness Society and WWF, and writes and presents for the ABC.



# Organisational Spotlight:



[climaterealityproject.org/training#](https://climaterealityproject.org/training#)

A global network of activists committed to spreading awareness of the climate crisis and working for solutions to the greatest challenge of our time.

Train with former Vice President Al Gore as a Climate Reality Leader and learn how you can inspire action for climate solutions in your community and beyond.





# Dr. Sally Gillespie

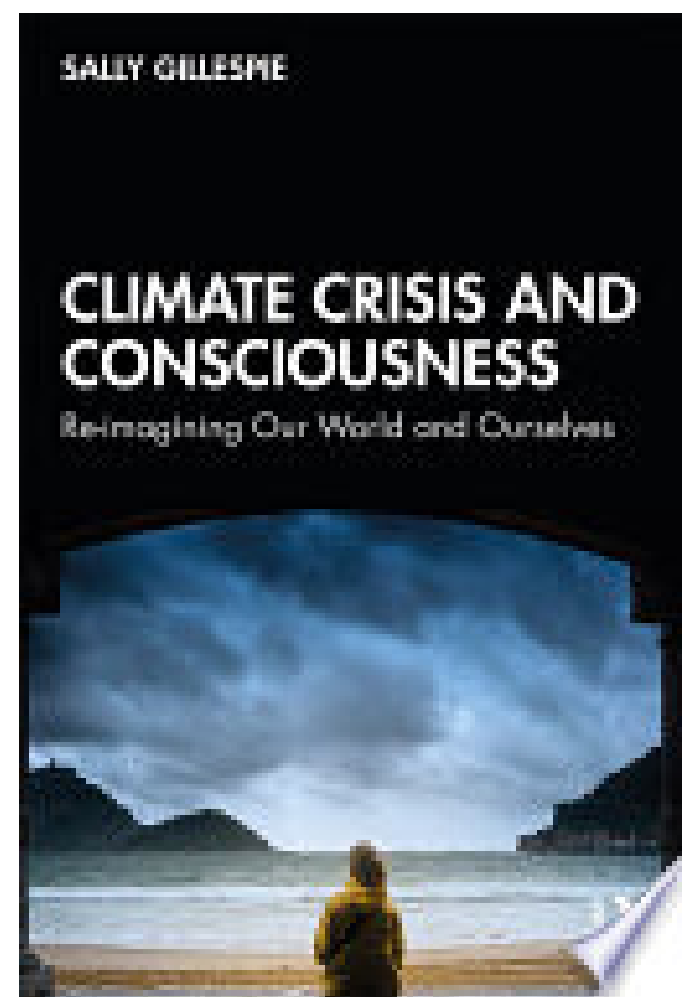
## **WORKSHOP: Holding Grief, Honouring Beauty, Healing our World: A reflective workshop on sustaining climate engagement**

Facing into the existential threats of climate crisis stirs profound emotions including grief, fear, heartbreak, awe and wonder. In this workshop, participants will be guided into sharing their stories to create a collective conversation which honours the range of feelings invoked by climate engagement. Through this process, we can honour the challenges and transformations of living with climate crisis awareness, and the experiences it draws us into. While the stimulus for these reflective conversations is global in scope, the focus will be on personal experience grounded in our local communities and ecosystems.

**BIO: Dr Sally Gillespie is a member of  
Psychology for a Safe Climate,  
the Climate Wellbeing Network,  
and the Climate Psychology Alliance.**

A former psychotherapist, Sally researched the psychological terrain of climate engagement for her PhD at Western Sydney University, where she has also lectured on ecopsychology and cultural change.

Sally's recently published book *Climate Crisis and Consciousness: Reimagining our world and ourselves* explores the psychological challenges and developmental processes of climate awareness within individuals and societies.



## **Organisational Spotlight:**



[www.psychologyforasafeclimate.org/](http://www.psychologyforasafeclimate.org/)

Psychology for a Safe Climate are a not-for-profit organisation that formed in response to the lack of individual and community engagement with climate change. Through workshops, presentations, and publications we contribute by: Increasing understanding of the psychology behind the challenges and difficulties of engagement with climate change; fostering psychological support and self care; and helping improve communication on climate change.



# Dr. Byron Smith



## WORKSHOP:

### Emotional barriers to climate action

Why do so many of us find it so difficult to take the kinds of actions we realise are necessary to pursue climate justice? Many of these barriers are political and economic, but there are also challenges within our own habits, homes and hearts. This workshop will focus on facing the climate denial inside each of us, and finding insight and courage to handle the fears that keep us trapped in a status quo that is catastrophically heating our planetary home.

**BIO: Byron is an ecological ethicist and Christian minister. His PhD in theological ethics focused on emotional responses to climate change in the context of Christian identity.**

He also holds honours degrees in theology, philosophy and literature. His time is split between pastoral ministry at St George's Anglican Church, Paddington, and a speaking/writing ministry helping churches join the dots between ecological justice and faith. He has authored a number of scholarly articles and book chapters, is a climate consultant for Common Grace (an Australian Christian justice movement), writes for a variety of online platforms, hosts a news digest podcast, The Good Dirt, and has joined in nonviolent direct actions against new coal projects and in support of people seeking asylum. Byron lives in Sydney with Jessica and their two young children and loves making soil and honey (or watching worms and bees do so).

## Organisational Spotlight:



The Australian Psychological Society acknowledges the scientific consensus regarding the existence of climate change and the substantial contribution the human population is now making to this via our greenhouse gas emissions.

We also acknowledge that climate change is the biggest global health threat of the 21st century and that current Australian and international carbon reduction commitments are nowhere near enough to avoid this threat.

**<https://www.psychology.org.au/About-Us/What-we-do/advocacy/Advocacy-social-issues/Environment-climate-change-psychology/>**





# Dr. Tim Senior

## **WORKSHOP: Climate Change Impacts on Health**

Climate change has been described as the greatest public health threat of the century. Even in the midst of the current COVID19 pandemic, climate change is affecting the health of people in Australia and across the world. This session will look at the current and predicted health impacts of climate change globally and locally. The impacts range from direct effects of more extreme weather and disasters, through to indirect impacts due to climate changing our food and water supply and the social consequences of these. While climate change may have a devastating impact on climate change, acting on climate change will also have significant benefits for our health. These will be outlined, and we hope to leave the session with practical actions for us as individuals, as congregations and as witnesses and advocates.

**BIO: Tim Senior works as a General Practitioner at the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service in South West Sydney and is active nationally in education and policy development in primary health care.**

He founded the environmental Impacts network of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. He writes on social and environmental causes of ill health, with his articles appearing in the Sydney Morning Herald and Crikey. He won the Gavin Mooney Memorial Essay prize for an article on climate change and equity and has published an e-book of his crowdfunded columns for the Croakey Health blog and was recently named as one of the top 10 health users of Twitter in Australia. He has worked in Central Australia and the Torres Strait.

Tim is a member of Picton Uniting Church, and is on the Church Council and regularly preaches and provides music there.

## **Organisational Spotlight:**



Seed is Australia's first Indigenous youth climate network. We are building a movement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people for climate justice with the Australian Youth Climate Coalition.

Our vision is for a just and sustainable future with strong cultures and communities, powered by renewable energy.

**[www.seedmob.org.au/](http://www.seedmob.org.au/)**





# Merle Conyer

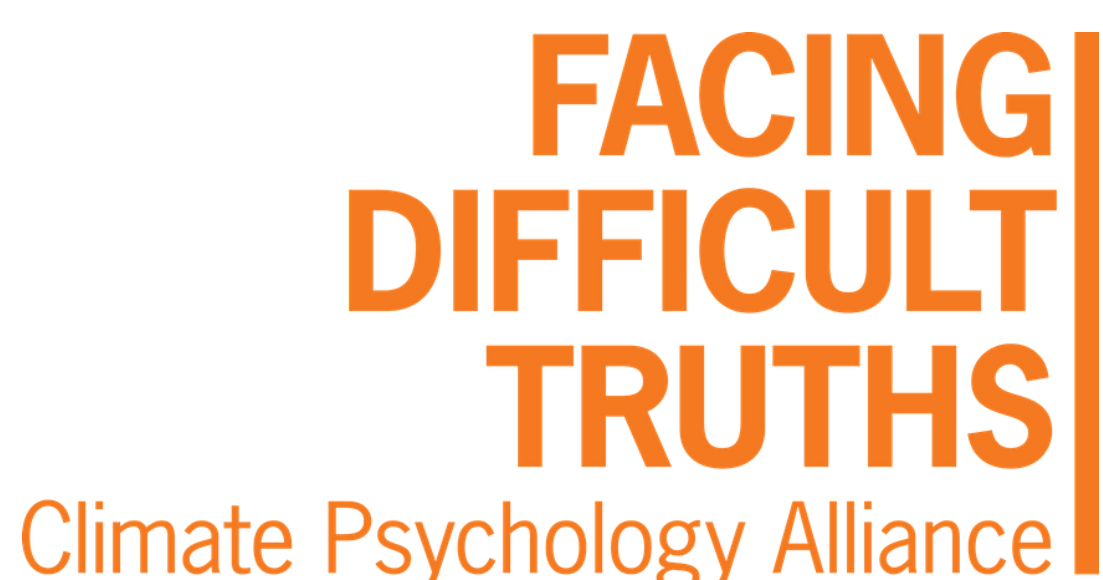
## **KEYNOTE: Responding to children and young people who are experiencing anxiety about our warming world**

Children and young people are concerned about the climate crisis and its potential effects on the quality of their life and the natural world. Research suggests this can inform complex emotions and a generalised anxiety that their future is being taken from them. A primary consideration for caregivers is how to support children and young people so they don't become overwhelmed and disabled by these worries and feelings, but instead harness them as springboards of deep caring that in time can be channelled into meaningful engagement. This presentation will offer practical ideas for having honest age-appropriate conversations and standing in solidarity with children and young people as we together face a climate changed future.

### **BIO: Merle Conyer walks alongside individuals, teams, organisations and communities responding to interpersonal, institutional, political, cultural and environmental trauma.**

She contributes as a psychotherapist, clinical supervisor, trainer and consultant in support of wellbeing, healing, advocacy and justice. Her experience includes service delivery, management, board and volunteer roles. Merle holds a Master of Counselling & Applied Psychotherapy, Master of Education, Master of Narrative Therapy and Community Work, Graduate Diploma in Communication Management, and Diplomas of Somatic Psychotherapy and Energetic Healing. For further background see [https://www.goodtherapy.com.au/merle\\_conyer](https://www.goodtherapy.com.au/merle_conyer) and [www.linkedin.com/in/merleconyer](https://www.linkedin.com/in/merleconyer)

## Organisational Spotlight:



The Climate Psychology Alliance is a group for anyone interested in making connections between depth psychology and climate change. People engaged in therapeutically informed work form the bulk of our membership but we welcome anyone who finds this perspective useful.

[www.climatepsychologyalliance.org/](https://www.climatepsychologyalliance.org/)



# Belinda Noble

## WORKSHOP:

### Tailoring Your Climate Messages

Building on some of Rebecca Huntley's principles, this workshop will help you develop the right messages, mediums and messengers to prompt climate action in your community or target market.

**BIO: Belinda Noble is the co-founder of Communicators Declare, a grassroots movement of communication, marketing, media and advertising professionals who care about the future and want to make a difference through their messages, action and influence.**

Belinda spent 20 years in news journalism, working as a reporter and supervising producer for TV stations in Australia, Asia and the UK. She moved to corporate communications and PR in 2011, firstly working in local government, and then as Head of Media & Communications for Australian Red Cross. She now prioritises climate action and co-founded Communicators Declare - aiming to build support in the communications industry, reduce science denial and greenwashing. She has a Masters in Leadership, a Graduate Diploma in Management, a BA in Communications and accreditations in public consultation, emergency management and customer experience.

## Organisational Spotlights:

### Communicators Declare



"Together, we must change the climate narrative."

[communicatorsdeclare.org/](https://communicatorsdeclare.org/)

### Uniting



Uniting is responsible for the social justice, community services and chaplaincy work of the Uniting Church in NSW and the ACT, providing care and support for people through all ages and stages of life and with a focus on people experiencing disadvantage and vulnerability.

Our purpose is to inspire people, enliven communities and confront injustice. We celebrate diversity and welcome everyone exactly as they are.

[www.uniting.org](https://www.uniting.org)





# Victoria Walker

## **WORKSHOP: Surviving Environmentalism**

This interactive session looks at our feelings of powerlessness in the face of climate change. It is common to experience overwhelm and anxiety when we absorb the extent of the challenges ahead. As someone who has faced feelings of helplessness in her environmental action, Victoria offers tools from activists and thinkers, as well as from her own lived experience. We will look at ways to step into our own unique roles within the broader movement, develop camaraderie with others, and find a sense of peace with our mission. We need to change our perspective on our power, and what is required of us in the years to come, to flourish as we change the world.

**BIO: Victoria is an environmental educator who spent ten years working within local government in sustainability, specialising in organic horticulture.**

Two years ago her frustration made her leave the sector to seek deeper, and more holistic ways to engage people around environmental justice. Victoria is influenced by her Masters studies in Social Ecology, as well as her deep love for nature. She endeavours to work as a 'cheerleader' for the environmental movement, by helping activated people to stay courageous, strong and emotionally well. Victoria delivers talks and presentations, and runs regular groups to support environmentalists. She also manages gardens locally in the Blue Mountains, and still champions backyard food production.

## **Organisational Spotlight:**

### **Climate Action Network Australia (CANA)**



**CLIMATE  
ACTION  
NETWORK  
AUSTRALIA**

CANA are a network that supports our members and their allies to take actions to protect people at home and abroad from climate change, to safeguard our natural environment, and to build a fair, clean, healthy Australia for everyone.

[www.cana.net.au/](http://www.cana.net.au/)



# Brooke Prentis

## WORKSHOP: Hope and Grief in the face of climate inaction: Whiteness and #BlackLivesMatter



I dream of an Australia built on truth, justice, love and hope. Those words are put in a particular order for a reason. However, the first thing I am often asked by non-Indigenous peoples, in this case white Australians is, "But Brooke, where is the hope?". The hope doesn't come first for Aboriginal peoples, it comes after truth, justice and love.

For me I cannot separate Aboriginal justice and Creation and climate justice. Our story as Aboriginal peoples is tied to the Creator and to country. Country is the all land, waters, sky, trees, plants, animals, birds, fish, mountains, and all peoples. The interconnectedness of all creation. The Elders say when the land is sick, the people are sick, and both have been sick a very long time. Perhaps the dominant culture's focus on hope first is leading to climate inaction. Together let's explore the depth of grief for Aboriginal peoples and how that grief gives us courage to take action and through action maybe we can all see hope.

## Campaign Spotlight: Christians Together for Climate



Our leaders need to know that everyday Christians care about decisive action on climate change. That's why Common Grace are joining forces with TEAR Australia to launch our new Campaign: Christians Together for Climate and offer a united, faith-based representation to our political leaders!



[www.commongrace.org.au/  
christians\\_together\\_for\\_climate](http://www.commongrace.org.au/christians_together_for_climate)





# Rev. Dr. Leah D. Schade

## VIDEO LECTURE: 'Green' Preaching in the 'Purple Zone': Environmental Sermons in the Red-Blue Divide"

Addressing the vital justice issues of our time, like climate change, in our preaching can be a challenge. Especially where congregations are divided or diverse in their opinions.

This lecture provides practical instruction for navigating the hazards of prophetic preaching with tested strategies and prudent tactics grounded in biblical and theological foundations.

Leah describes her sermon-dialogue-sermon process of deliberative dialogue as an approach to dealing with these challenges and expanding the pastor's level of engagement on justice issues with parishioners beyond the single sermon. This process equips clergy to help their congregations respectfully engage in deliberation about "hot topics," find the values that bind them together, and respond faithfully to God's Word.

### **Leah D. Schade is Assistant Professor of Preaching and Worship at Lexington Theological Seminary in Kentucky.**

An ordained minister in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America since 2000, Leah has served congregations in rural, urban, and suburban settings. She earned both her MDiv and PhD degrees from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia (now United Lutheran Seminary). Her publications include: *Creation-Crisis Preaching: Ecology, Theology, and the Pulpit* (Chalice Press, 2015); *Preaching in the Purple Zone: Ministry in the Red-Blue Divide* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2019); and *Rooted and Rising: Voices of Courage in a Time of Climate Crisis*, co-edited with Margaret Bullitt-Jonas with essays from a cross section of faith leaders and activists offering their spiritual wisdom and energy for facing the difficult days ahead (Rowman & Littlefield, 2019). Leah has served as an anti-fracking and climate activist, community organizer, and advocate for environmental justice issues and is the "EcoPreacher" blogger for Patheos.com: <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/ecopreacher/>.

## Organisational Spotlight:

The Five Leaf Eco-Awards are an Australian ecumenical environmental change program of awards specifically designed for churches and religious organisations.

[fiveleafecoawards.org/](http://fiveleafecoawards.org/)





# Krystyna Kidson

**WORKSHOP: 20 minutes and 5 questions:  
Truly all you need to have a transformative,  
therapeutic, Spirit-centred, climate-related  
conversation.**

In pastoral settings, we may not have the space, time, and/or confidence to help our people process the complex issues around ecogrief, anxiety, and spirituality; the dissonance or disavowal underlying climate-related stress and conflict; while also empowering them to innovate and create new ways of thinking and living. But we still must act! So what **can** we do when we don't **know** what to do, the issues seem overwhelming, or we don't have much time to talk? We try something new.

In this workshop, you will learn the ACT ProSocial Matrix as we do it together – a simple, effective, evidence-based trauma tool, now adapted for **anyone** to use with individuals or in groups. Help people of faith quickly sort through these issues, cut through their internal narratives, and make more effective, workable choices to support themselves and the global community.

**BIO: Krystyna Kidson is a psychologist and resilience coach, helping mission-minded leaders and teams in the faith, social enterprise and nonprofit sectors get on with the business of transforming lives, even in the face of stress, overwhelm, conflict and burnout.**

She holds a Masters of Clinical Psychology (Hons), a Bachelor of Psychology (Hons; Minor: Neuroscience), is a Member with the International Association of Coaching, and is one of the few certified ACT/ProSocial Matrix trainers in the world. She is also a recognized pastoral supervisor with the Baptist Association of NSW and ACT Churches and helps oversee their Gen1K coaching program.

## Organisational Spotlight:



The Climate Council is an Australian independent non-profit organisation formed to provide independent, authoritative climate change information to the Australian public.

[www.climatecouncil.org.au](http://www.climatecouncil.org.au)





# Cassandra Sundaraja

## **WORKSHOP: Designing Interventions to Address Climate Inaction**

Eco-anxiety and eco-distress emerge in part from a sense of helplessness around reducing the effects of climate change. Therefore, interventions require to empower individuals to make an effective contribution towards mitigating the harm associated with decades of exploitation. However, each environmental issue has unique barriers and challenges, and it is essential to take these into consideration while designing interventions.

Over the past two and a half years, I have been researching a combination of existing models to construct and implement climate change-based interventions. I am testing this approach on addressing the palm oil crisis. I will talk about palm oil, its benefits and its impact on rainforests, biodiversity and climate change. I will also take you through how I identified target behaviour that the general public could perform, and then explored the specific barriers and drivers that influenced the target behaviour, which were subsequently used to design an appropriate intervention. I will discuss the results obtained thus far.

**Cassandra's PhD research is looking at ways to encourage people to make pro-environmental decisions with respect to palm oil, in day-to-day shopping.**

I was born in India, but spent a large part of my childhood in East Africa (specifically in Nairobi, Kenya). I returned to India during my teens and went on to become a clinical psychologist. I ran my own practice in India, seeing clients (children, adolescents, adults, couples and families) for counselling and psychotherapy. I am currently doing my PhD in Psychology at UNE and am in my final year. My research interests have been around empathy, parenthood, interpersonal violence and environmental psychology. I am also interested in studying and providing interventions to address mental health concerns arising out of climate change, such as eco-anxiety.

## **Organisational Spotlights:**



Palm Oil Investigations - Palm Oil Free Certification and help finding Palm Oil free products.

[www.palmoilinvestigations.org/](http://www.palmoilinvestigations.org/)



WWF is one of Australia's most trusted conservation organisations. We work in Australia and in our Asia-Pacific backyard to protect endangered species and habitats, meet the challenge of climate change, and build a world where people live in harmony with nature.

[www.wwf.org.au/what-we-do/food/palm-oil](http://www.wwf.org.au/what-we-do/food/palm-oil)



# Greg Rolles

## **WORKSHOP: Loving our neighbour in a time of climate chaos**

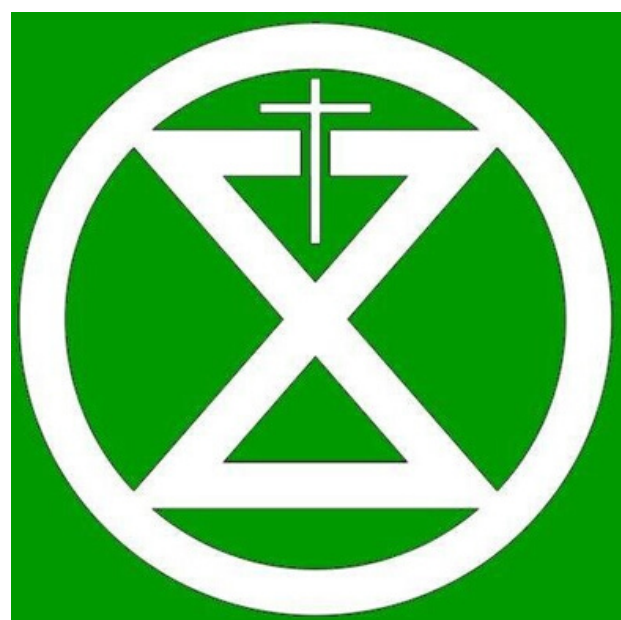
After the recent bushfires, storms in Bangladesh and island communities drowning in the Pacific how can we stay true to our Christian witness? How do we genuinely love our neighbours as ourselves? Greg will take you through his last two years living in the intersection of faith, non-violence and community and will explore the strengths and limits of non-violent direct action as a witnessing tool for Christ's message of hope and resurrection in our time.

**BIO: Greg Rolles is a Quaker and has spent the last two years fully exploring questions of non-violence and the climate crisis, and was the first person in Australia to trail the necessity defense for climate protection in a court of law.**

Greg was part of the Stop Adani camp on the Birri-Gubba Nation and has been running non-violence training around Yuggera and Turrbal country, for climate protectors.

He is currently studying a Masters of Theology from Whitley College, has a Masters in International Relations from UQ and spent 7 years as secondary geography and history teacher.

## **Organisational Spotlight:**



Christian Climate Action is a community of Christians supporting each other to take meaningful action in the face of imminent and catastrophic anthropogenic climate breakdown. Inspired by Jesus Christ, and social justice movements of the past, we carry out acts of non-violent direct action to urge those in power to make the change needed.

[www.facebook.com/ChristianClimateActionAus/](https://www.facebook.com/ChristianClimateActionAus/)

[christianclimateaction.org/](https://christianclimateaction.org/)





# Dr. Kim Loo

## WORKSHOP: The Coal Face of Climate Change

Climate Change has serious health implications. Hear from a frontline General Practitioner about what she sees at the coal face of this climate crisis. Hear personal stories, not just data, and learn how we can use these stories to change hearts and minds.

### BIO:

**Dr. Kim Loo is the Acting Chair of Doctors for the Environment NSW.**

MBBS (Syd) FRACGP DipPaed(NSWU)

She is a member Climate Health Alliance, Australian Medical Association, and Citizens Climate Lobby Australia. She is the mother of two children.

As a doctor for more than 30 years, Kim has seen firsthand how climate change contributes to increased impacts on people's health - and can contribute to the risk of heart attacks and respiratory failure. Seeing these impacts has driven her to become a leading climate activist. She says "it's so important for doctors to speak out... if doctors don't speak out, who will?" Watch her speak on being at the coalface of the climate crisis [here](#).

## Organisational Spotlights:



Doctors for the Environment Australia is a national voluntary organisation of medical doctors and students.

Good health is inextricably linked to healthy, stable environments. Our mission is 'to promote health through care of the environment'.

[www.dea.org.au](http://www.dea.org.au)



The Climate and Health Alliance (CAHA) is an alliance of stakeholders in the health sector who wish to see the threat of climate change addressed through prompt policy action.

[www.caha.org.au](http://www.caha.org.au)

# Saturday

10:15 Introduction to the last day

Interview - School Strike 4 Climate and

Christian Students Uniting

TED Church stories

Sustainable Schools

12:15 Keynote: 250 years of advocacy for Creation

and Climate Justice:

Learnings from Aboriginal peoples - Brooke Prentis

12:45 Reflection and Wrap up

Evaluation Survey

1pm Virtual Community Lunch

2pm Close





# Brooke Prentis

## **KEYNOTE: 250 years of advocacy for Creation and Climate Justice: Learnings from Aboriginal peoples**

When Arthur Phillip landed in Sydney on 26 January 1788 he arrived in a woodland. Literally one of his first actions was to cut down a tree. Since these very first acts of colonisation, Aboriginal peoples have been aware that the peoples and land are out of balance. One could say we've been fighting, often with the loss of our lives, for a safe climate for 250 years.

These original injustices - shown recently with the casual demolition of a 46,000-year-old sacred site in the Pilbara - reveal themselves again in the lack of climate action and the denial of climate change that is already affecting lands in the Torres Strait and northern Australia. There is much to learn from Aboriginal peoples - loss, lament, grief, survival, adaptability, and resilience - but most importantly how to fight and advocate for creation and a safe climate for ourselves and future generations.

**BIO: Brooke Prentis is a Wakka Wakka woman,  
an Aboriginal Christian Leader,  
and the CEO of Common Grace.**

Common Grace is a movement of over 45,000 Australian Christians passionate about justice. Brooke is the first Aboriginal person to be appointed as the CEO of a national Christian organisation in Australia. Brooke is an International speaker and writer, as well as a community pastor and justice advocate. Brooke has appeared on ABC's The Drum and NITV's The Point, as well as a number of Radio National programs including the Religion & Ethics Report, God Forbid, and Soul Search. Brooke works ecumenically speaking on issues of Justice affecting Australia and sharing a message of Reconciliation as friendship. Brooke dreams of an Australia built on truth, justice, love, and hope.





# Sue Hassler Dempsey

## KEYNOTE: Sustainable Schools

Using Gerringong and Kiama schools as examples, Sue will share what can be achieved in schools, some of the challenges, and the different initiatives they have tried.

These include:

- Hosting Sustainability Days with local schools twice a year
- Sustainability Committees
- Waste Free Wednesdays
- Making their canteen eco
- Playground recycling
- Kreative Koalas
- Easter foil ball competition
- Sustainability Travel Expo
- Playground to Plate
- Upcycled Art
- Bush Tucker Gardens

## BIO: Sue Hassler Dempsey is the founder of Sustainable Schools Australia

Sue founded Sustainable Schools Australia 2 years ago to help schools to focus on practical actions and waste management. Sustainable Schools Australia share information with teachers and schools about different ideas and ways they can approach sustainability, presenting a range of options, not just one set way of approaching issues. They encourage sustainability champions to work with their communities, and bring them on the journey with them.

Over the last year, Sue has been working hard with her year 5 class at Gerringong Public School to become a Zero Waste classroom, with significant success, Sue also connected the ABC's 'War on Waste' program with Kiama High School, leading to them being featured on the popular TV program and following up with a range of waste and sustainability initiatives.



### Sustainable Schools Australia >

PUBLIC GROUP · 3,754 MEMBERS



### < Sustainable Schools Australia

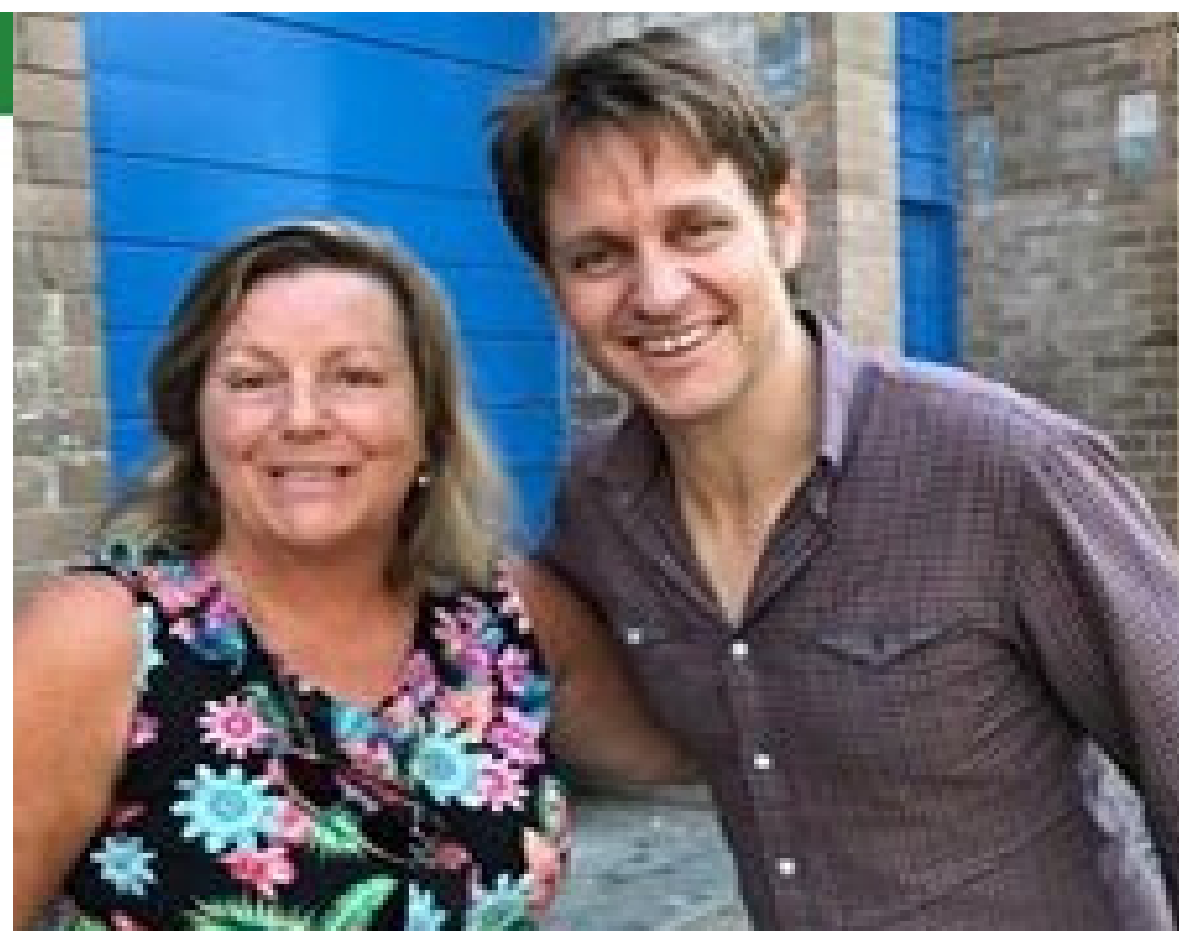
#### About

This is a group for teachers and school community members who are interested in implementing sustainable options/actions/resources for your community. To help each other by the sharing of resources, experiences, ideas and of course support 🟢💚🌍



Public

Anyone can see who's in the group





# Sponsors:

The logo for 'Uniting' is set against a solid magenta square background. The word 'Uniting' is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font. A white horizontal line is positioned beneath the letters 'u', 'n', and 'i'.The logo for 'COMMON GRACE' is centered within a solid dark blue circle. The words 'COMMON' and 'GRACE' are stacked vertically in a white, all-caps, sans-serif font.

**Five Leaf Eco-Awards**