

**ADVANCE NOTICE FOR LENT 2015**

**INTERVENTION AND RECONCILIATION**

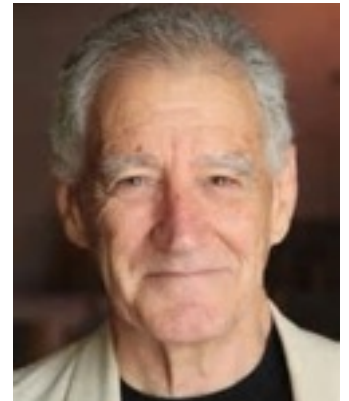
*A theological and sociological reflection on intervention and reconciliation in the light of the Easter story*

THURSDAY EVENINGS 7.30 – 9.30pm

**February 17<sup>th</sup> through to 26<sup>th</sup> March 2015**

(Also a day-time series to be arranged)

- \* Are there truly effective ways to act for the good of others?
- \* *What are the gifts and limitations of our rich theologies of the cross?*
- \* Where is God when it may seem that there is no divine intervention?
- \* *Given personal responsibility, how do we understand sin and evil?*
- \* Reconciliation is a core concept in the Uniting Church's Basis of Union but how does it happen in practice?



**SPONSORED BY PCNetSA**  
Led by Rev Dr Jonathan Barker

**Adelaide Visit of Prof Ann Belford Ulanov**  
**11th – 13th September 2014**

Professor Ann Belford Ulanov, Professor of Psychiatry and Religion at Union Theological Seminary in New York and a Jungian analyst in private practice, visits Adelaide next month for a series of presentations about her ideas and work, around the theme:

***'The Un-shuttered Heart'.***

**DATES AND TIMES:**

Thursday, 11th September, 7-9.30pm  
Friday, 12th September, 7-9.30pm  
Saturday, 13th September, 1-4pm

**VENUE:**

Pilgrim Uniting Church, 12 Flinders Street Adelaide  
**Bookings are essential.** Contact Judy Shaw by Sept1st  
Stillpoint Spirituality Centre  
5 Burnell Drive Belair SA 5052  
[stillpoint@internode.on.net](mailto:stillpoint@internode.on.net)

**PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY NETWORK of SA**

**Mail** c/- Effective Living Centre,  
26 King William Rd,  
Wayville 5034

**Office** Tues, Wed, Fri 10am-3pm

**Email** [pcnet@effectiveliving.org](mailto:pcnet@effectiveliving.org)

**Phone** 8271 0329

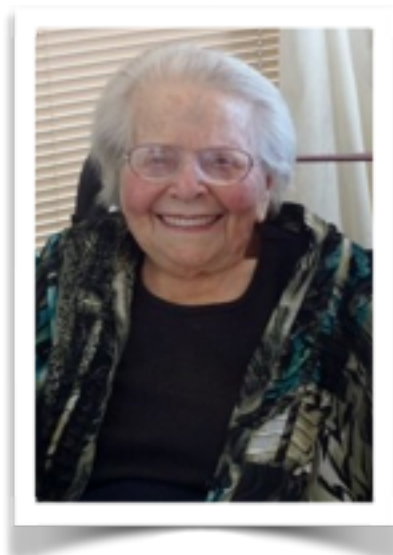
**Committee Members 2014**

Jonathan Barker	Bruce Ind
Ros Chittleborough	Sue Jarrad
Esmond Dowdy	David McKirdy
Jana Norman	

## PCNet Nonagenarians - tales of two PCNetters who still enjoy working the “leetle grey cells” well into their nineties.

### Joyce Branson

Life began for me in Auburn, a suburb of Sydney. At the conclusion of schooling I trained in shorthand and typing and entered the Commonwealth Public Service. My family belonged to the small Congregational fundamentalist Church and I attended worship and Sunday School. As a child I loved the stories of Jesus. I believed there was a God and as I grew older was encouraged to become involved in Church life, particularly Sunday School teaching. By this time I was beginning to wonder about the God about whom I was hearing from the pulpit and also encountered in the Old Testament. The God depicted seemed very different from Jesus and the God I had loved from early childhood. The words of many hymns also worried me. They were so concerned with “me” and whether I was saved! I enjoyed Sunday School teaching and bought many of the reference books suggested in the training material. In one of these, *“How the New Testament was written”* I found some new ideas. God hadn’t written the Bible, nor had he dictated it to the writers! The Gospels were what their writers had remembered and understood about what Jesus had said, and this made sense to me, but I was never sufficiently confident to share my views with anyone else.



I met Gordon Branson and we married in 1946. Gordon commenced training for the ministry at Camden College, Sydney, and was given two churches to care for while he studied – quite a task. He had not come from a fundamentalist background. I was busy with four children and fulfilling the role of Minister’s wife which I enjoyed. I had only reached Intermediate at school so felt unable to question. Gordon’s background was much more liberal than mine, but not as stimulating as I am now finding. Gordon retired in 1980 and I was able to do some study with Murdoch University. Gordon died in 1987.

I was glad to be involved again in the life of Newland. One Sunday I noticed the words after the Bible readings were different. **“In these words** is the Word of God” and I mentioned this to Rev Alan Green (a retired ex-Methodist Minister) and he immediately introduced me to the writings of Rev John Shelby Spong. What a joy they were to become to me! Later Rev Anne Butler became our Minister and conducted a series “Discovering the Bible Sherlock Holmes style”. She commenced a study group to meet fortnightly at the manse. Now I was able to share my doubts and fears frankly with others and find God in a very different way. Rev Christine Garner continued this study during her time at Newland church.

Another exciting discovery was that there were like-minded people in other churches in the Victor Harbor area. We formed NewLandscapes which still meets on the fifth Sunday. I began to realise that there was a Progressive Christian Movement far beyond Victor Harbor and that I had not been wrong in my doubting all those years ago.

### Nonagenarians cont.

I am enjoying other modern writers. Progressive Christianity has released me from the idea that Christianity has a monopoly on God. Now I am convinced there is only one God for all faiths and that doubting is not wrong. Where do I see the Church of the future? Quoting the words of Spong "I believe God lives within us all and we must allow God to live and love through us". Surely this will be the new church.

Joyce Branson

### Gwen Lamey

Gwen was born during the First World War at Burra, where her father was Principal of the high school there. She is a little shy of revealing her actual age, but "during the First World War" will give you a good indication. The family moved from Burra when Gwen was 5, and she spent her later childhood, teenage years, and young adulthood in the Woodville area.

Gwen attended Woodville Primary and High schools, and went on to Adelaide High, where she completed her Honours year. She then attended Adelaide Teachers College and Adelaide University, where she completed a Bachelor of Arts degree. At that time Gwen was one of the few primary school teachers in South Australia to hold an Arts degree.



Gwen was the Head Mistress of Nain Primary School, a one-teacher school near Greenock in the Barossa Valley, and had several other appointments before marrying a teacher in 1940. As was the case then, on getting married Gwen had to resign from her teaching position. In 1963 she was re-employed as a teacher in several city schools. Her husband died of a heart attack in 1967, leaving Gwen to raise 4 sons alone. She continued teaching, and spent the last twelve years of her career as a teacher and course-writer at the South Australian Correspondence School when, having reached the compulsory retiring age, she was forced to retire.

Gwen had a traditional Christian upbringing in the Woodville Methodist Church. She was sent to Sunday School and regularly attended church with her family. As a teenager she was influenced by a member of the Oxford Group Movement, which encouraged members to live according to the standards of absolute honesty, absolute purity, absolute unselfishness, and absolute love. Though recognised as impossible to attain, these standards were guidelines to help determine whether a course of action was directed by God.

In early adulthood, Gwen's faith began to evolve as she questioned what to her were "fairy tales". She thought things through for herself, and read widely on religious topics. With her non-traditional beliefs, Gwen felt isolated, and had no like-minded kindred spirits to share her faith journey with. She still attended church regularly, but privately did not agree with many of the things that she heard in services of worship.

In her late 70s, Gwen was made aware of a group from her church that met fortnightly to discuss more liberal Christian views and social justice issues. Gwen joined the group with alacrity and has found it to be a great support over the last 20 years. She was surprised to find others from her church held similar views to her.

### Nonagenarians cont.

In this group, Gwen has found that she can be herself, that she can speak openly and honestly, and can say what she really thinks, without fear of being judged or excluded.

Gwen says that the greatest contribution of Progressive Christianity to her faith journey has been the liberating experience of discovering like-minded people, with whom she can be open and free about what she thinks. Gwen likes to think for herself and come to her own conclusions, and not feel guilty about thinking differently. Gwen recognises a need of belonging, and values the company of those who hold similar moral attitudes. She sees the church of the future as needing to be open to change and new ideas, and having a high regard for the value of small groups.

Gwen is highly respected as an active participant in her small group. She has an active mind, is widely read and travelled, and in the not too distant past took up the challenge of becoming computer literate. She does internet searches on many areas of interest, and enjoys email communication. Gwen lives in her own home, has an extensive garden, and is remarkably physically active for her age. Formerly an enthusiastic bushwalker with a retired group, she can no longer walk so far, but still plays table tennis weekly.



The Progressive Christianity Network of SA  
will hold a **Networking Day**  
on Saturday, 15<sup>th</sup> November,  
from 10 am – 3.30 pm  
at the Effective Living Centre,  
26 King William Road, Wayville.

The program will feature  
Singing the progressive message,  
and will include opportunities for networking among  
participants.

Further information will be available  
closer to the event.



### KEEPING IN TOUCH...

Would you like to be listed on the PCNet database to receive the newsletter electronically or would you like to update your details? Do you know of anyone who might like to receive the PCNet newsletter? Phone the Effective Living Centre, 8271 0329 Tues, Wed or Fri, or email [pcnet@effectiveliving.org](mailto:pcnet@effectiveliving.org) with your contact details.