

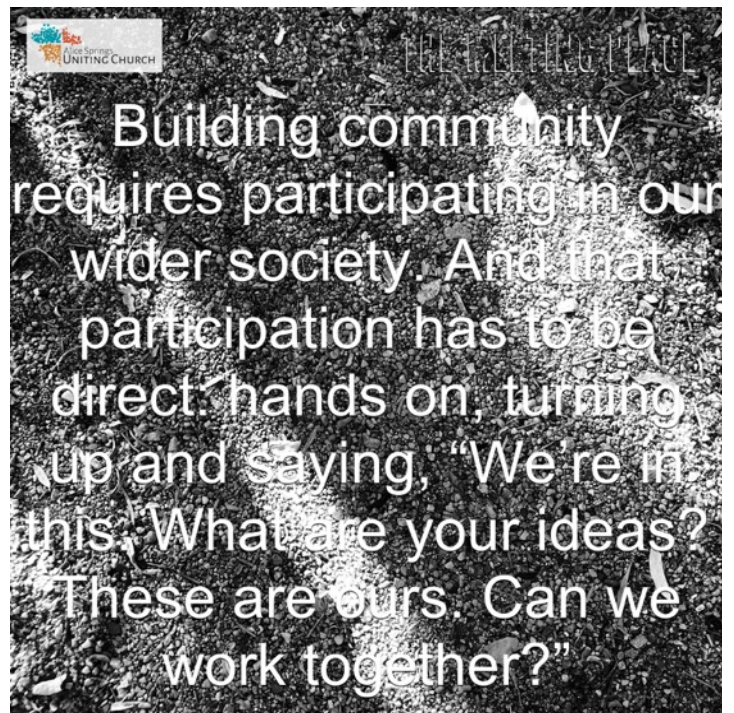
## The Meeting Place News

Nov 1 2017

Dr Steve Bevis

To make a contribution to building community requires participating in our wider society. And that participation has to be direct: hands on, turning up and saying, "We're in this. What are your ideas? These are ours. Can we work together?"

Churches and NGOs alike can too often 'go it alone' while talking endless, fine-sounding words about community and belonging. We can be little echo chambers, and, in the end, the only people who hear our ringing bells are ourselves. It is a sonic fact that too much sound bouncing off your own walls creates a terrible little ring - a sound you don't want to hear - take it from this old sound engineer!



That's why here at The Meeting Place and Alice Springs Uniting Church we try to take time to connect and to participate in public conversations and shared attempts at finding the way forward for our town and region. From exploring shared projects with the Town Council, to turning up at Territory Government meetings, to participating in local heritage and tourism forums, our staff and members seek to share in the task of building up the common good. When we think about being 'The Meeting Place', we think about our contribution to a task greater than ourselves. And we are thrilled at the way we can offer our resources to help build the greater good.

On that front, it is wonderful that the recent round of funding for the [#liveAlice](#)/Mparntwe NT govt scheme has seen multiple organisations partner with us to help revitalise the Mall area with creative inputs over the coming months. We love being an open site, where boundaries are erased and people can enjoy both the site and each others' creativity. From Aboriginal youth learning to DJ with CAAMA to exhibitions of art to hola-hooping, it's all going to be happening!

Meanwhile, the weekly hard yards of opening Op Shops and hosting visitors goes on. The drop in centre has been sporadic of late, with key volunteers away, but we look forward to more regular hours being reestablished soon.

And our Arrernte friends - in what's now known as 'The Yellow Shed' - have also offered a few recent events and are exploring ways in which a permanent home for Arrernte language can be sustained on our site.

The fight for funding and resourcing goes on in our region, and one of the good news stories is the expansion of renal units in remote towns. This is something that has been fought for by Aboriginal peoples and their supporters for years now. And, town by town, the battle is bearing fruit. Last Sunday, we farewelled a few Luritja women who are moving back to Mt Leibig to begin dialysis 'on country'. This is such a wonderful development for them. Of course, we are sad to see them go, but we are grateful that a way, and the will, has been found to help them live at home among those wonderful desert and arid lands that hold such rich and sacred stories. What an expansive home our friends have - may they enjoy every minute of being home, ngurra, once more.

Thanks for reading and for your support as together we strive to be a meeting place with our community.

Cheers,  
Steve

You can support our work at The Meeting Place:  
BSB 634634 (Uniting Financial Services)  
Acc 100 039 619 (Alice Springs Uniting Church)  
(In the reference put: ASP 18 plus your initial and surname, so we can track deposits).

## THE MEETING PLACE

