

SALTBUSH
UNITING THE SCATTERED COMMUNITY

BELONG!

What's inside...

Some words to think about!	3
What is Saltbush?	4
What helps shape Saltbush?	5
What does it mean to belong to Saltbush?	7
Where to begin and how to use Saltbush?	8

Uniting the Scattered Community

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BELONG!

Some words to think about...

“Through human witness in word and action, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ reaches out to command people’s attention and awaken faith; Christ calls people into the fellowship of his sufferings, to be the disciples of a crucified Lord; in his own strange way Christ constitutes, rules and renews them as his Church.”¹

How do we perceive Christ reaching out to command our attention and awaken our faith in the society and century in which we find ourselves?

What is the “strange” way of a renewing Christ for today?

In many ways the institution of the Church is still functioning as if the place of the church in society, the size of church membership and the role of Ministry is as it was in the 1900’s. As we know all elements of both church and social life have changed and it is the time for us to find new ways of enabling the work of the church and most importantly the work of the Christian community (congregation).

The Church does not have the trust, voice in society and politics, nor the basic interest that it once held. Yet the church is still clinging to a structure that reflects only a small part of its 2000-year history; a structure from a time and world that no longer exists. In brief our church is now made up primarily of smaller congregations who do not have a Minister, never will have and who live in isolated, secular communities.

“If you have a new world, you need a new church. You have a new world!” ²

It is not true however that there is no longer a place for Christian communities who are able to discover renewed life as the Way of Christ amongst the lonely, needy, and broken hearted and be vital within their own communities.

Again, it is not true that a Christian community has to be wealthy or large to be in mission and that small and remote does not belong to the wider body, the Church, and do not have a role to play. The future of the church will be found in smaller, not larger, or mega, gatherings.

This is the reality and this is Saltbush... Uniting the Scattered Community irrespective of size or location!

1 Christ rules and renews the church.
Basis of Union
1992, paragraph 4

2 McLaren, B.
The church on the other side: Exploring the radical future of the local congregation.
Zondervan 2006. P. 15

What is Saltbush?

Saltbush – Uniting the Scattered Community, seeks to encourage and connect smaller, Uniting Christian communities, irrespective of size or location. Saltbush seeks to enable us as a broad church to embrace the reality of being Christian community in the 21st. century and to affirm the place and capacity of smaller Uniting Church congregations both to gather and be in mission.

“For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it”.³ We thought these words of Jesus were about us as individuals, but they are also about us as disciples.... And about the church!

Part of the ethos of Saltbush – Uniting the Scattered Community has to be centred around those people and congregations who are willing to give up, lose, let go of, in order to find life. This also includes finding new life as congregations, as Christian communities, whose gathering and going is significantly founded in being disciples of Christ in our contemporary context.

The place of Saltbush – Uniting the Scattered Community is to connect and encourage, irrespective of size or location both:

Existing smaller Uniting Christian communities who are willing and able to pare back as far as possible their traditions, habits, comforts and ways to discover the Way of Christ lived out in the community in which they find themselves.

New intentional gatherings, who previously did not see themselves as ‘church’, and who through hospitality, Christian community, faith reflection and compassion, live out the Way of Christ within the community in which they find themselves.

Each of these Christian communities will be, live, express themselves and gather in many different ways to the traditions of the present.

Saltbush is enabled through the work of the Synod of NSW & ACT and Uniting Mission and Education. The Saltbush team don’t see our ministry to be another project, programme or product, but see us all in ministry together seeking to be a movement of Christians as part of the Uniting Church who are live out a changed, grounded response to discipleship in 21st. Century.

What helps shape Saltbush?

The Saltbush team draw into our ministry what we call the “missional relationship”. This is the way God draws near and is marked by discipleship – hospitality – sitting with others – and announcing the nearness of the Kingdom of God to humanity and creation.

The fundamental theology of both the Jewish and Christian traditions is bound to the belief in both history and faith of the relational God. The Pentateuch, Psalms, Prophets and Gospels all revolve around the revealing and journeying with the relational God. This is also the foundation of our understanding of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Saltbush, as a movement of change and grounded mission has over time reflected on the Mission of the Seventy from Luke 10. Theology should be foundational to our practice and for Saltbush the Mission of the Seventy is an insightful image of both the relational God and the nature of mission.

To shape our ministry we reflect on the following:

- This passage sits immediately following a few people who request to follow Jesus, but have reasons for why they are unable. In Luke 10, Christ sends those who are the willing - both to follow, but also to enter into the uncertain.
- The journey is undertaken with simplicity and a light load –without binding structure and debilitating expectation.
- The journey is into the uncertain and into the regions and homes where there will be both welcome and rejection. The mission unfolds where there is welcome and hospitality.
- There is time to sit in the places of welcome – to be there around the table with others.

Luke 10: 1-11

After this the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go. ²He said to them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest. ³Go on your way. See, I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves. ⁴Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and greet no one on the road. ⁵Whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace to this house!’ ⁶And if anyone is there who shares in peace, your peace will rest on that person; but if not, it will return to you. ⁷Remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide, for the labourer deserves to be paid. Do not move about from house to house. ⁸Whenever you enter a town and its people welcome you, eat what is set before you; ⁹cure the sick who are there, and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’ ¹⁰But whenever you enter a town and they do not welcome you, go out into its streets and say, ¹¹‘Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet, we wipe off in protest against you. Yet know this: the kingdom of God has come near.’

- The mission is encompassed by discipleship, the greeting of peace and the announcement of the nearness of the Kingdom of God.
- On return there is amazement at what has taken place and it is all bound in the missional relationship of transformation in people's lives.

Theology and Christology as practice within Saltbush

From this we draw into our ministry what the Saltbush team call the "Missional Relationship". This is the way God draws near and is marked by discipleship – hospitality – sitting with others – announcing the nearness of the Kingdom of God.

It is only through this "Missional Relationship" that we participate in the revealing of God and the announcement of the nearness of God to others and to our world. It is through this missional relationship that Christian community is formed and lives drawn to experience Christ. This Mission of the Seventy is also the first example of followers shaping the future church and similarly for our church within our 21st. Century Australian context, the future lies in smaller, diverse Christian communities shaped by this missional relationship.

The future of the church will not be found in large, mega, commercialised organisations, but as always has been true, through smaller, diverse, grounded, missionally relational gatherings of the Christian community.

In every aspect of the practice of Saltbush as a ministry and movement we seek to nurture this missional relationship as a means of discipleship and transformation of individuals, groups, congregations, Presbyteries, towards the church of the future.

The work of Saltbush is to encourage and connect Uniting Christian community, irrespective of size or location and to value the transforming way of God through the missional relationship. This is bound in valuing what is, including respecting the chaos, and the foundational Jewish/Christian belief that through chaos life is created..

What does it mean to belong to Saltbush?

The Synod of NSW & ACT along with the generosity of Presbyteries and congregations is building a Saltbush Ministry Team which is made up of Scattered Community Ministers, working equally as a team while exercising their ministry in diverse ways.

Belonging to Saltbush is a two-way relationship between an individual, congregation or Presbytery and the Saltbush Team. As this relationship begins and grows through genuine reflection and change it is our hope that together we will all grow in our understanding of what it is to be Christians and part of the Christian community in mission in the wider world.

Belonging means that the Saltbush Team commit to:

- Personal contact with each congregation/ Presbytery and leaders and being available for conversation and support.
- Providing an online message/Saltbush liturgy/Sacramental guidance for your gathering brought to you by your Saltbush ministry team; ministers who are in relationship alongside you.
- Building a conversation around the present future and the way of gathering, belonging to your local community and pastoral reflection.
- Conversation and wider support around practical needs and challenges.
- Invitation to participate in Scattered Community Gatherings (regional gatherings for all), to receive and contribute to Ruminations (Saltbush publication) and receive other Synod support where possible.

Belonging means a congregation commits to:

- A willingness to enter honest, guided missional conversation around the way of gathering, belonging to your local community and pastoral reflection.
- The Saltbush ethos of gathering around the word, embracing a broad church as part of the body of Christ and missional action as part of discipleship.
- A willingness to engage with both the Saltbush Team and other Saltbush communities (congregations)
- A willingness to consider the opportunities of offerings/donations towards Saltbush Ministry as part of the work of the wider church.

To be a Saltbush Community is to be:

Disciples of Jesus who gather around the Word.

Practitioners of the Christian faith.

Connected to the network of Saltbush Community.

Where to begin and how to use Saltbush?

Firstly, you are invited to contact us... We are in ministry alongside you!

 [Uniting the Scattered Community](https://www.facebook.com/saltbushcommunity)

 saltbushcommunity.uca.org.au



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BELONG!

You can attend

Saltbush Cafés

In regular series of three or four nights the Saltbush team hold online cafés centred around diverse themes or readings. Saltbush cafés are easy to attend, relaxed and an encouraging way to meet others and explore life and faith together.

Scattered Community Gatherings

Three to four times a year in different rural or coastal locations the Saltbush team hold Scattered Community Gatherings. You can also attend these online from wherever you are to wherever we are. These gatherings are centred around worship, encouragement, education and the practice of discipleship.

Look on our website under **Latest News** and **Events**.

You can receive

Word around the Bush

Each week of the year the Saltbush team present a visual message based on the lectionary reading for that week. You are free to watch and use this message in your own congregation or group. You can also print off the Saltbush liturgy that is provided each week to accompany the visual message.

Ruminations

This is our publication that is available both online and in post three times a year. Each issue has a theme and tells the story of people across the land along with theological reflection and news about Saltbush. Ruminations is available free to anyone or any congregation would like to receive it.

Saltbush Conversations (Publications)

Our publications are available for any congregation or group who are willing to have some discussion around who you are, how you gather and how you live out your faith. These publications (Talking about Salt, The Great Unravelling, Growing Intentional Christian Communities of Practice) are all available free to any congregation or group who would like to receive them. They are also available both online and in post.

Digital packages for congregations

If your congregation would like a Saltbush digital package so that you can use and connect with us and the wider church simply get in touch. A digital package includes: smart tv, mobile stand for the tv, all connectors and cables, tv camera and our support to set it all up. Your Saltbush digital package is provided to you for free.

Visits

The Saltbush team are always willing to visit your congregation or group to meet you, talk with you about how it is for you as a congregation or Christian community and how you seek to be part of the missional relationship with others. Simply get in touch and one of the Saltbush team will come to visit you.

Look on our website under **Events, Word, Ruminations, Resouces** or **Contact US**.



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You can find us, what's on, our writings and support for your Christian community and congregation by looking here:



<https://saltbushcommunity.uca.org.au/>



You can do it!

The Saltbush team are always willing to help you connect, but here are a few simple steps to help you begin.

How to download a video and liturgy from Word around the Bush:

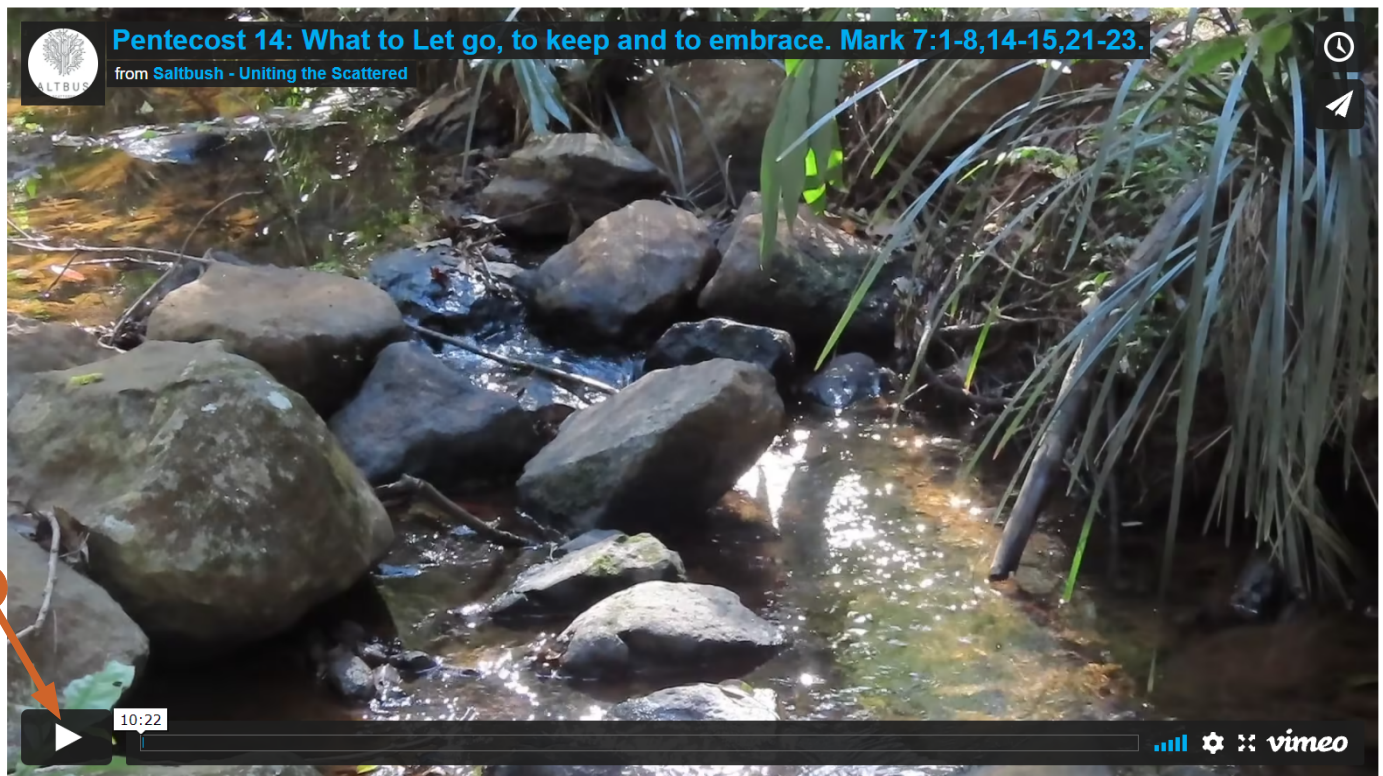
1. Go to our website: saltbushcommunity.uca.org.au
2. Navigate to "The Word"
3. **3** Find the "Word around the Bush" for the week you want to view. You can go further back by using the green ovals at the bottom of the page.
4. **4** Click on the image or "Watch now" icon.

The screenshot displays a grid of six liturgical resource cards. Each card features a representative image, a title, a brief description, and a 'Watch now' button. Two orange arrows with numbered callouts are overlaid on the grid:

- Callout 3:** Points to the 'Pentecost 3 – The Folk of Jesus – Mark 3: 20-35' card, which includes the text: 'This passage has two distinct parts - a narrative and also a selection of little sayings or parables. It's the type of passage in which'.
- Callout 4:** Points to the 'Pentecost 2 Jesus' Posture. Mark 2:23-3:6' card, which includes the text: 'In so many ways Jesus holds within himself the posture of the one who comes to proclaim and embody the reign of God. A posture'.

At the bottom of the grid, there is a navigation bar with green ovals containing the numbers 1, 2, 3, ..., and 63. An orange arrow points from the 'Pentecost 3' card to the '3' oval.

5. Now you are on the page where you can watch the video **1** download the video **2** and download the Saltbush liturgy for the week. **3** After you have clicked to download the PDF for the Saltbush liturgy you can simply print it off, fold it, and use in your congregation or group.



Pentecost 14: What to Let Go, to Keep and to Embrace. Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23.

9 August 2021

Jesus challenged the tradition of the elders. It continues today. What traditions do we need to let go, to keep and to embrace.



Download your worship video for this episode of The Word Around the Bush.



Download your print-friendly worship resources for this episode of The Word Around the Bush.

6. After you click download for the video it should start to download immediately.

When the file has downloaded you can save the video to a location of your choosing. (The file will be located in your downloads folder – or in Windows 10 at the bottom of the Webpage – or on a MAC – in Finder/Downloads)

How to use Saltbush liturgies and download music included in our liturgies

1. Saltbush doesn't provide every word, every song/hymn or every part of what has traditionally been used within a church service. Partly this is to remind us that we can shape the way we gather differently and also to allow you to shape and include your own inspirations, words and items. However, the Saltbush liturgy does provide you with a way to move from start to finish.
2. In the PDF you will find one or more sections called **Music for Reflection**. Here you can go straight to where the music is for you to listen to.
3. **3** Hover your mouse cursor over the blue hyperlink music title and click.

Music for Reflection

Suggested song: In you we live.

@Karen Oer


<https://malcolmgordon.bandcamp.com/track/in-you-we-live-keren-oei>

4. A new website will open and at this point you have the option to play the track from the webpage. **1** This is called streaming. You can also buy the digital track/album and use it wherever you take your computer even without internet. **2** Saltbush encourages you to buy the track to support musicians.

MALCOLM GORDON
Into the Deep

music community

In you we live - Keren Oey
from [Songs for the Road](#) by [Various](#)

1  00:00 / 03:59

Digital Track
Streaming + Download

Includes high-quality download in MP3, FLAC and more. Paying supporters also get unlimited streaming via the free Bandcamp app.

2 [Buy Digital Track](#) name your price
[Send as Gift](#)

SONGS FOR THE ROAD

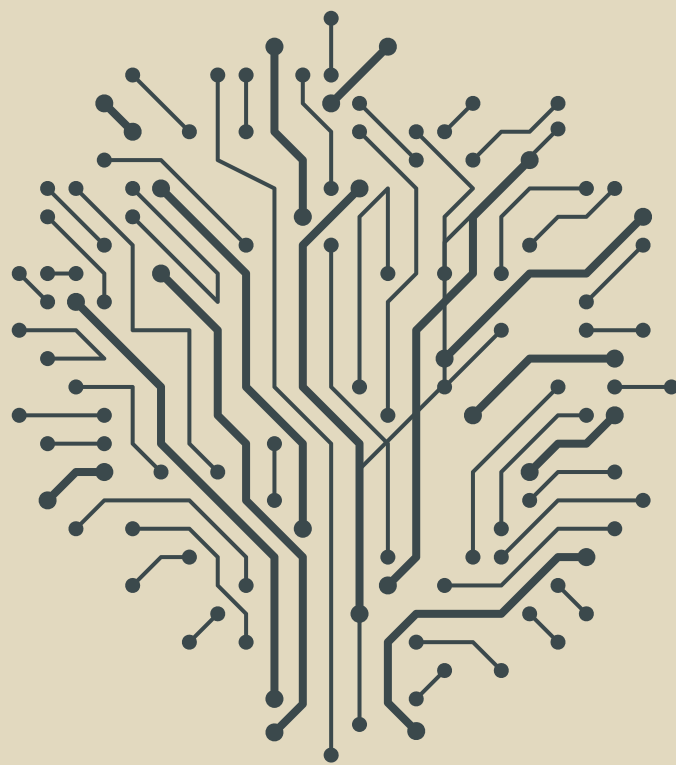
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5. Small Bluetooth Speakers are a great asset these days for carrying around to increase the volume and quality of music. They are mostly rechargeable battery operated and linked to your computer or mobile phone. Here is an example only of blue tooth speakers and the wide range available – they are available widely at any electronic store.

<https://www.jbhifi.com.au/headphones-speakers-audio/portable-bluetooth-speakers/>

6. Your computer will have a Bluetooth device symbol and will enable you to pair your device to computer or mobile – often located in your settings area – follow the instruction that come with the device.





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