

# Presbyterian Church of Australia

1901 –

URL: <https://www.presbyterian.org.au/>

## Details

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The Presbyterian Church of Australia was formed in 1901, shortly after Federation. The Presbyterian Church of Australia is a Protestant Christian church, with roots in Scotland. The Presbyterian Church formed a Social Services Department in the 1940s that ran aged care, hospital and court chaplaincies and children's homes such as St Andrew's Boys' Home in Manly. In 1977, when the Uniting Church was formed, some of these children's homes were transferred to the new church, but the Presbyterian Social Services Department continued to run welfare and children's programmes.

The Australian Macquarie Dictionary defines Presbyterianism as;

*Church government by presbyters, or elders who are equal in rank, consisting of ministers (teaching elders) and layman (ruling elders).*

Congregations are under the jurisdiction of a Presbytery to which they belong in their district.

Presbyterianism is very strong in Scotland, and its development in Australia and New Zealand is linked to Scottish migrants.

Presbyterians arrived in New South Wales on the First Fleet in 1788 but the first Presbyterian service delivered in New South Wales was in the Hawkesbury in 1803. Members of the Church were involved in city missions and work with children throughout the 19th and 20th century – Sir James Burns, the wealthy founder of Burnside Homes, was a Presbyterian.

In 1977 some members of the Presbyterian Church, and a number of organisations linked with it, joined the Uniting Church in Australia. Many welfare functions of the Presbyterian Church were transferred to the Uniting Church, including Burnside.

The Presbyterian Church congregation remains active. In 2001 the Presbyterian Church was the fourth largest in Australia.

## More info

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### Related Entries

Ran

- [Ernabella Mission \(1937 - 1974\)](#)  
Date: 1937 - 1970
- [St Andrew's Home \(c. 1943 - 1986\)](#)  
The Presbyterian Church of Australia's Social Services Department ran St Andrew's Boys' Home at Manly.  
Date: 1943 - 1972
- [St Andrew's Presbyterian Boys' Hostel \(1923 - 1945?\)](#)

#### Run by

- [Burnside Presbyterian Homes for Children \(1955 - 1978\)](#)

#### Related Organisations

- [Presbyterian Social Services \(1988 - current\)](#)  
The Presbyterian Church of Australia runs the Presbyterian Social Services Department and its Child and Family Program.
- [Uniting Church in Australia \(1977 - current\)](#)  
Some members of the Presbyterian Church, and some related organisations, joined the Uniting Church in Australia when it was formed in 1977.
- [Morialta Protestant Children's Home \(1924 - 1972\)](#)  
Representatives of the Presbyterian Church formed part of the Board of Management of Morialta Protestant Children's Home.
- [Morialta Protestant Children's Home, Board of Management \(1924 - 1974\)](#)  
Representatives from the Presbyterian Church of Australia formed part of the board of management which ran Morialta Protestant Children's Home, 1924-1974.
- [Morialta Children's Homes Incorporated \(1972 - 1974\)](#)  
Representatives of the Presbyterian Church formed part of the Board of Management which ran Morialta Children's Homes Incorporated.
- [Toorak Gardens Boys' Hostel \(1967 - 1972\)](#)  
Representatives of the Presbyterian Church formed part of the Board of Management of Morialta Protestant Children's Home which ran Toorak Gardens Boys' Home.
- [Burnside Presbyterian Orphan Homes \(1911 - 1955\)](#)
- [Burnside Homes for Children \(1978 - 1986\)](#)  
The Presbyterian Church was supportive of Burnside Homes for Children, and the land on which the homes stood was vested in the Church. However, the Presbyterian Church was not directly involved in the management of the homes. In 1977 Burnside Homes for Children moved to the management of the Uniting Church of Australia.  
Date: 1976 - 1977
- [Queen Victoria Hospital for Women and Babies \(1895 - 1978\)](#)  
The Presbyterian Church of Australia was involved in running the Queen Victoria Hospital for Women and Babies
- [Presbyterian Metropolitan Mission \(1900 - 1973?\)](#)  
The Presbyterian Metropolitan Mission was the welfare arm of the Presbyterian Church in Sydney.
- [Presbyterian Adoption Agency \(1950s - 1970s\)](#)

## Resources

- Presbyterian Church of Australia, [The Presbyterian Church: Our History](#), No date
- [Welcome to the Presbyterian Church of Australia](#), Presbyterian Church of South Australia, No date

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