

# Memoirs of Moving On

## **A life of faith, passion and resilience**

### **by Dorothy McRae-McMahon**

#### **DAUGHTER, MOTHER, PARTNER, MINISTER, ACTIVIST**

Faith, passion and resilience have been the hallmarks of Dorothy McRae-McMahon's extraordinary life. Now 70, her memoirs begin with growing up in drought-stricken country Victoria, part of a big rambling family with a strong mother and wise but distant Methodist minister father. Theirs was very much a typical Australian life.

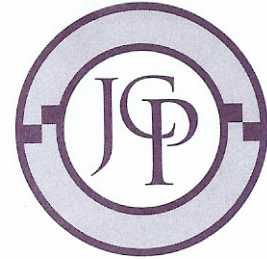
In her late teens and with little experience of the world, Dorothy met Barrie McMahon and they soon married and settled in the outskirts of Melbourne to begin what appeared to be a typical suburban existence. After the birth of their second child, however, two events shattered Dorothy's world: her two-year-old son was diagnosed with severe autism and her beloved younger sister was killed in a car accident. While these challenges would have stopped many in their tracks, they are but two of many seemingly insurmountable events in Dorothy's life from which she has moved on. Her ability to rise above such adversity will inspire every reader.

Well-known internationally as a speaker and activist, Dorothy McRae-McMahon is best known in Australia as the former Pitt Street Uniting Church minister in Sydney. Her memoirs contain fascinating stories from the church and her ordination, as well as from her travels in Africa, Asia and the Middle East, and from her time as moderator of the World Council of Churches Worship Committee. Of all the causes with which Dorothy has been involved, she specifically addresses her work with the peace, women's and republican movements.

Dorothy is also brutally honest about how she dealt with the late-in-life realisation that she was a lesbian. With great integrity she talks about the effect this had on her marriage, her children and her life in the church, including the attacks she suffered at the hands of a neo-Nazi group. After embracing her sexuality at 50, Dorothy has now found the love of her life, Ali.

Dorothy McRae-McMahon is a generous storyteller. She writes with bracing honesty and evokes joy and heartbreak in equal measures. Her story is a celebration of life and work. ABC Radio broadcaster Julie McCrossin will launch *Memoirs of Moving On* at Gleebooks, Sydney, on Tuesday October 5.

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## Dorothy McRae-McMahon

Born in Zeehan, Tasmania, Dorothy grew up in Victoria but has lived more than half her life in Sydney. Her working life has been varied, beginning as a pre-school teacher and followed by 16 years at home caring for her children, especially her eldest son who has an intellectual disability. For eight years she was the associate executive secretary of the NSW Ecumenical Council, organising its international aid appeal and developing education programmes.

Dorothy is perhaps best known for 10 years as the Minister with the Pitt Street Uniting Church in Sydney. She also served as the national director, Mission for the Uniting Church in Australia, for five years. Now retired, Dorothy spends most of her time writing, and is part of the editorial team of the *South Sydney Herald*. She also continues with her speaking engagements and occasional broadcasts for ABC religious programmes.

Her international work has taken her to 32 countries for various councils and committees. In 1998 she was the first woman to moderate the World Council of Churches Assembly Worship Committee, which gave her significant experience working with ritual life across many cultures and languages. She created the service, held in St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney, to welcome Nelson Mandela shortly after his release from prison.

Dorothy McRae-McMahon is the author of nine other books, including *Rituals for Life, Love and Loss*, and the recipient of many awards, including the Jubilee Medal from the Queen for her work with women in NSW (1977), the Australian Government Peace Award (1986), the 1998 Australian Human Rights Medal and an Hon Doctorate of Letters from Macquarie University for her work with minorities and contribution to the spiritual life of the community (1992).

Dorothy embraced her sexuality in 1987 and came out publicly in 1997, which led to both attack and support. She lives in Sydney with her partner, Ali, has four children and three grandchildren.

**DOROTHY McRAE-McMAHON IS AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW. TO ARRANGE A TIME, PLEASE CONTACT ANDY PALMER AT PUBLICITY MATTERS ON 02-9380 8210 or [andy@publicitymatters.com.au](mailto:andy@publicitymatters.com.au).**

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