

## MINISTERIAL CHANGES (since the 32<sup>nd</sup> Synod)

- |    |                                   |  |
|----|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. | <b>RECEIVED BY<br/>ORDINATION</b> | <p><b>Ministry of the Word</b></p> <p><b>Presbytery of Bremer Brisbane</b><br/>Sharene Fechner<br/>Glen Schweitzer<br/>Janet Staines<br/>Adam Tipple</p> <p><b>Presbytery of Moreton Rivers</b><br/>Nathan Barton<br/>Aaron Moad<br/>Beatriz Skippen</p> <p><b>Presbytery of North Queensland</b><br/>Michelle Cullen</p> <p><b>Ministry of Deacon</b></p> <p><b>Presbytery of Bremer Brisbane</b><br/>David Nix</p> |
| 2. | <b>DEATHS</b>                     | <p><b>Ministers of the Word</b><br/>Wilfred Blake<br/>Judith Dalton<br/>Richard Diffin<br/>Jack Frewan-Lord<br/>Arnold Gates<br/>Raymond Hunt<br/>Douglas Kirkup<br/>Frank Le Bherz<br/>Rev Douglas McKenzie OAM<br/>Margaret Mills<br/>Robert Morgan<br/>Albert (Trevor) Quant<br/>Gordon Robinson<br/>Graham Ross<br/>Hendrik (Hans) Spykerboer<br/>Ed Smith<br/>Maxwell Vines<br/>Brian Wells</p>                 |

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|----|---|--|
| 3. | <b>RETIREMENTS</b>  | <p><b>Presbytery of Bremer Brisbane</b><br/>Ian Smallbone</p> <p><b>Presbytery of Mary Burnett</b><br/>David Fanning<br/>Robert Harriman<br/>Raymond Nutley</p> <p><b>Presbytery of South Moreton</b><br/>Malcolm Coombes<br/>Lynne Gibson<br/>Ivan Kirk<br/>Russel Knight</p> <p><b>Presbytery of North Queensland</b><br/>Russell Clark</p> <p><b>Presbytery of The Downs</b><br/>Jenny Sims<br/>Bruce Raymond</p> |
| 4. | <b>MINISTERS /<br/>DEACONS RECEIVED<br/>FROM OTHER<br/>SYNODS</b> | <p><b>Synod of New South Wales / ACT</b><br/>John Martin<br/>Michelle Shumack</p> <p><b>Synod of South Australia</b><br/>Esteban Lievano</p> <p><b>Synod of Western Australia</b><br/>Karma loapo</p>  |
| 6. | <b>MINISTERS RECEIVED<br/>FROM OTHER<br/>DENOMINIATIONS</b>       | Helen Dick   |
| 7. | <b>MINISTERS RECEIVED<br/>BY READMISSION</b>                      | Bruce Moore  |
| 8. | <b>MINISTERS WHOSE<br/>RECOGNITION HAS<br/>BEEN WITHDRAWN</b>     | Terry Ayling<br>Andrew Fox<br>Melanie Perkins  |

## Appointments (since the 32nd Synod)

### **Board for Christian Formation**

Appointed for an eight-month term from 2 February 2017 to the 33rd Synod:

Mr Callan Battley

Resignation accepted effective 31 December 2016:

Mr Peter Lockhart

Rev Dr Elizabeth Nolan

Appointed for a seven-month term from 3 March 2017 to the closure of the 33rd Synod:

Rev Stuart Cameron

### **Cromwell College Board**

Appointed for a three-year term from 6 October 2016 to 6 October 2019:

Mrs Judy Young

Ms Dayrelle Abbey

### **Finance Investment Property Board**

Appointed for a three-year term from 6 October 2016 to the 34th Synod:

Mr Hayden Gaffel

### **Governance Nomination Remuneration Committee**

Appointed for a three-year term from 4 June 2016 to 3 June 2019:

Ms Bronwyn Clarkson

Mr Hayden Gaffel

Mr Glenn Poole

Resignation accepted effective 4 June 2016:

Professor Myles McGregor-Lowndes

Resignation accepted effective 6 October 2016:

Mr Hayden Gaffel

Resignation accepted effective 11 October 2016:

Mr Tim Longwill

Resignation accepted effective 2 March 2017:

Mr Andrew McBryde (Chair and member)

Appointed for a seven-month term from 3 March 2017 to the closure of the 33rd Synod:

Mr John Lister (Chair)

Appointed for a six-month term from 5 May 2017 to the 33rd Synod:

Mr Greg Adsett

### **John Flynn College Council**

Appointed for a three-year term from 7 April 2017 to 6 April 2020:

Rev Bruce Cornish

Mr David King

Reappointed for a three-year term from 7 July 2017 to 6 July 2020:

Ms Heather Humphries

### **The Lakes College Board**

Appointed for a three-year term from 4 May 2016 to 4 May 2019:  
Mr Peter Solly

Appointed for a three-year term from 2 June 2016 to 2 June 2019:  
Mr Gary Adsett

Appointed for a three-year term from 3 March 2017 to 2 March 2020:  
Mrs Melva Hobson

Appointed for a three-year term from 7 April 2017 to 6 April 2020:  
Ms Wendy Boglary  
Mr Craig Mercer

### **Moreton Bay College Board**

Appointed for a three-year term from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2019:  
Mr Graham Dredge

Appointed for a three-year term from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2019:  
Dr Julie Beeby

Extension of appointment for a six-month term from 1 January 2020 to 1 July 2020:  
Dr Julie Beeby

Extension of appointment for a six-month term from 1 January 2019 to 1 July 2019:  
Mr Neil Ballment

Reappointed for a one-year term from 7 July 2017 to 1 July 2018:  
Mr Col Sutcliffe

### **Multi-Cross Cultural Reference Group**

Appointed as Convenor and Chairperson from 6 October 2016:  
Ms Akesa Racava

Resignation accepted effective 6 October 2016:  
Ms Terani Lima

Appointed for a three-year term from 5 May 2017 to 4 May 2020:  
Ms Louisa Yu

Appointed for a three-year term from 7 April 2017 to 6 April 2020:  
Mr David Busch  
Rev Tevita'Unga Taki

Reappointed for a one-year term from 7 April 2017 to 6 April 2018:  
Mr Jack Shao

### **Presbyterian and Methodist Schools Association (PMSA) Board**

Extension of appointment for a three-month term from 30 March 2017 to 30 June 2017:  
Mr Gary Lynch

Appointed for a three-year term from 26 June 2017 to 25 June 2020:  
Mr Cornelius Graves

Reappointed for a three-year term from 7 July 2017 to 6 July 2020:  
Mr Greg Adsett

### **Schools and Residential Colleges Commission**

Appointed for a three-year term from 4 June 2016 until the 34th Synod:  
Mr Mike Hennessy  
Mrs Noela Lister

Reappointed for a six-month term from 4 June 2016 to 31 December 2016:  
Mr Mike Millard

Resignation accepted effective 13 June 2016:  
Dr Marilyn Healy

Appointed for a three-year term from 1 December 2016 to 1 December 2019:  
Ms Anne Copeland

### **Scots PGC College Council**

Appointed for a three-year term from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2019:  
Mr Martin Webb

Reappointed for a three-year term from 2 February 2017 to 31 January 2020:  
Mr Peter Campbell

### **Shalom Christian College Board**

Reappointed for a four-month term from 1 December 2016 to 31 March 2017:  
Mr Mike Millard

Reappointed for a three-month term from 5 February 2017 to 30 April 2017:  
Mrs Elaine Rae

Appointed for a three-year term from 3 March 2017 to 2 March 2020:  
Ms Wendy Boglary  
Ms Yvonne Cadet-James

Resignation accepted effective 6 April 2017:  
Ms Wendy Boglary

Appointed for a three-year term from 7 April 2017 to 6 April 2020:  
Ms Jan Pool

Appointed for a three-year term from 1 May 2017 to 30 April 2020:  
Rev Bruce Cornish

Appointed for a three-year term from 5 May 2017 to 4 May 2020:  
Ms Lyndell O'Connor

Reappointed for a three-year term from 1 June 2017 to 31 May 2020:  
Mr Richard Wallace

### **Synod Chaplaincy Commission**

Resignation noted 2 February 2017:  
Rev Jenny Busch

Rev Helen Dick  
Rev Andrew Gunton (Chair)  
Rev John Saunders  
Rev Jenny Tymms

Appointed for a three-year term from 2 June 2017 to 1 June 2020:

Mr Phil Smith  
Ms Natalie Lewis  
Rev Dr Peter Hobson

Appointed for a three-year term from 2 February 2017 to 1 February 2020:

Rev Brian Hoole (Chair)  
Ms Julie Mackay-Rankin  
Mr Bruce Moore

### **Synod Committee for Counselling**

Appointed for a three-year term from 7 April 2017 to 6 April 2020:

Mrs Akesa Racava

Appointed for a three-year term from 10 March 2017 to 9 March 2020:

Rev Gerda Olafsen  
Rev Peter Blauw  
Rev Lynne Gibson  
Rev Douglas Foster

### **Synod Committee for Discipline**

Reappointed for a three-year term from 5 June 2017 to 4 June 2020:

Rev Heather Allison  
Rev Lyn Burden  
Mrs Sue Crittall  
Mr Ian Park (Convenor)  
Rev Keren Seto  
Rev Paul Walton  
Rev Jan Whyte

### **Synod Ecumenical Relations Committee**

Appointed for a three-year term from 4 June 2016 to 3 June 2019:

Mr John Agnew  
Rev Dr Clive Ayre  
Mr Neil Ballment  
Pastor Richard Lance  
Pastor David Busch  
Rev Sunil Kadaparambil

Appointed for a three-year term from 7 July 2016 to 6 July 2019:

Mr Nathan Barton  
Ms Fiona Patterson  
Rev Russell Morris

### **Synod Interfaith Relations Committee**

Appointed for a three-year term from 4 June 2016 to 3 June 2019:

Mr John Agnew  
Mr Neil Ballment  
Mrs Julie Mackay-Rankin

Rev (Retired) Garth Read  
Rev Heather Griffin

Appointed for a three-year term from 7 July 2016 to 6 July 2019:

Ms Philipa Core  
Rev Anne Hewson

### **Synod Pastor Application Committee**

Reappointed for a three-year term from 7 April 2017 to 6 April 2020:

Rev Helen Dick  
Dr Marilyn Healy  
Mr Terry Stanyer

### **Synod Sexual Misconduct Complaint Committee – Members**

Appointed for a three-year term from 1 September 2016 to 31 August 2019:

Ms Lauris Clark  
Mr Ross Kerley

Appointed for a three-year term from 2 February 2017 to 1 February 2020:

Rev Di Bos

Appointed for a three-year term from 7 April 2017 to 6 April 2020:

Rev Brian Gilbert

Appointed as Chair until 5 May 2017:

Rev Peter Arnett

Appointed for a six-month term from 5 June 2017 until 31 December 2017:

Ms Jenny Field

Resignation accepted effective 4 August 2016:

Rev Kaye Ronalds

Appointed for a three-year term from 5 June 2017 until 4 June 2020:

Rev Doug Winten  
Rev Peter Arnett  
Rev Bob Miles

### **Synod Standing Committee**

Appointed for a seven-month term from 7 April 2017 until the 33rd Synod:

Ms Louisa Yu

### **UnitingCare Qld Board (UCQ)**

Resignation accepted effective 31 December 2016:

Ms Jude Munro

Reappointed for a three-year term from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2020:

Mr Craig Barke (Chair)  
Ms Maree Blake  
Mr Chris Townend

Appointed for a three-year term from 1 May 2017 to 31 March 2020:

Mr Nigel Alexander

Appointed for the term of her employment:  
Ms Anne Cross (Chief Executive Officer)

### **Wesley Mission Queensland Board**

Appointed from 1 July 2016 for the remainder of their existing terms:

Ms Lisa Bundesen  
Mr David Edwards  
Mr Cornelius Graves  
Ms Florence Kearney  
Mr Paul Newman (Chair)  
Mr Robert Packer  
Ms Elaine Rae  
Ms Nancy Spencer  
Ms Elaine Unkles

Appointed for a three-year term from 28 February 2017 to 29 February 2020:

Mr Cornelius Graves  
Mr Paul Newman (Chair)

### **33rd Synod Business Committee**

Committee established comprising:

The Moderator  
The General Secretary  
The Associate General Secretary  
The Executive Officer Corporate  
Any additional members as agreed, and appointed, by the Moderator and General Secretary.





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## Report from the Moderator

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### Context

The Synod sits within a network of inter-related councils of the Uniting Church in Australia. Its responsibilities according to the constitution are to “have general oversight, direction and administration of the church's worship, witness and service within its bounds. It shall exercise executive, administrative, pastoral and disciplinary functions over the presbyteries within its bounds ...” The role of moderator is to chair the meetings of the Synod, including the Synod Standing Committee, and as expressed in the regulations and variously over the years in reviews and resolutions, to give “pastoral and spiritual leadership to the life of the church in Queensland”.

This is expressed by engaging with the presbyteries on matters such as resourcing, collaborating, and reflecting on strategic direction in terms of the congregational expression of the church's life. The moderator also is involved in UnitingCare by being an ex officio board member and supporting the work of the directors of mission of UnitingCare. The church's ministry in education and residential colleges is an important aspect of our life, and the moderator is a significant contact point for schools and colleges with the wider church along with the Schools and Residential Colleges Commission.

The moderator's context of ministry includes inter-faith liaison and ecumenical relationships. Both these roles are supported by a Synod committee.

The other main area within the moderator's ministry is in dealing with matters of social justice and public interest.

# Report

## **Presbyteries and congregations**

There have been a number of aspects in my engagement with presbyteries and synods over this Synod term.

- Visiting congregations and presbyteries to encourage them in their mission, speak on the wider work of the church, and encourage reflection on the Synod-discerned priorities; supporting them in times of crisis.
- Encouraging people in placements to continue formation and development, and help the determination of scholarships for the Graduate Certificate in Ministry and Mission.
- Encourage congregations in ecumenical and inter-faith endeavours – using the “Covenant to Pray” initiative.
- Working closely with the presbytery ministers in building collaborative leadership relationships so that there are significant pastoral care opportunities; through the Presbytery/Synod Interface meeting, the presbyteries and Synod are engaging closely on managing the life and mission of the church.
- Engaging with and supporting the multicultural life of our church.
- Offering leadership in exploring new models of presbytery funding and placement of ministers.
- Chairing Joint Nominating Committees for presbytery ministers. We have seen three new presbytery ministers called since last Synod – two to take up placement in 2018. These new presbytery ministers – David Busch (South Moreton), Rev Dr Kerry Pierce (Central Queensland) and Rev Chris Crause (Mary Burnett) offer every evidence that they will work collaboratively and offer encouraging leadership to their respective presbyteries. They are all deeply committed to the life and ministry of the Uniting Church in Australia.
- I thank Rev Alan Robinson, (South Moreton), Rev Bob Harriman (Mary Burnett), and Rev Brian Gilbert (Central Queensland) for their leadership and faithfulness in the roles they fulfilled in their presbyteries. I’d also like to acknowledge the role of Rev Dr David Mackay Rankin in his chairing of South Moreton Presbytery.

## **Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress**

The UAICC is represented in Queensland by the Calvary Presbytery. This presbytery is now strongly engaged with the other presbyteries and the Synod. This has meant that there have been significant opportunities for sharing of resources, life, and mission. I have been a regular attendee at events at Shalom Christian College. UnitingCare Queensland has shown tremendous leadership in embodying the church’s commitment to the covenant by ensuring the ministries begun under Calvary presbytery’s oversight are continuing and are effective.

## **Community service ministry of the church**

I was provided opportunity to represent the wider church at a number of Wesley Mission Queensland events; anniversary celebrations and the opening of Hummingbird House, a significant achievement for families with children who have life-limiting conditions.

Most of my participation in the community services ministry of the church has been through UnitingCare Queensland. Ex officio membership of the board has given me opportunity to become more aware of the deep commitment of the UnitingCare board and staff and the significant challenges facing their work. It has been a privilege to journey alongside them. The new director of mission team has settled in well and the changes in the roles of the team are bearing fruit. The environment of this “apostolic ministry” of church continues to be challenging as we also deal with major changes in leadership.

I’ve had the opportunity to present to the board on the mission of the church and to executive orientation workshops. I have also made a number of visits to sites for events and for deeper appreciation of UnitingCare’s work.

### **Schools and Residential Colleges**

Aspects of engagement

- Visits on special occasions and inductions
- Supporting the commission in its work, particularly in seeking board members
- Engaging with boards and principals
- Engaging with partner churches
- Supporting the placement of chaplains in schools.

### **Ecumenical relations**

The report of the committee is to hand.

I have participated in

- Queensland Churches Together (QCT) assemblies
- heads of churches gatherings
- Being Church in Rural Queensland retreat
- Religious Instruction in Schools meetings to advance oversight of this ministry.

The ecumenical environment is both challenging and a place for opportunity. The formal structures of ecumenical relations have lost a lot of energy, but on specific issues such as ecology there is strong collaboration and much fruitful work. The place of the Uniting Church in Australia is in some ways unique in that our story witnesses to the joy of union; yet it is a joy for which there does not seem to be either interest or appetite in these days. But we continue to bear fruit of our union.

One particularly challenging area is in rural Queensland. There has been substantial decline in the mainline denominations and some growth in emerging Christian networks, yet institutional barriers to deeper cooperation remain.

Queensland Churches Together has given leadership to the challenges around Religious Instruction in state schools and fruitful collaboration is occurring with churches which are not members of QCT.

The capacity of the churches in Queensland to engage government and the wider society is constrained to some degree by the absence from QCT of some traditional denominations and

the emerging networks. The heads of churches and QCT recognise this, and some inquiry as to the possibility of a broader group is being pursued.

In April this year I had opportunity, via Mary Burnett Presbytery's Dostana group, to visit the Diocese of Amritsar, part of the Church of North India. This was a wonderful ecumenical visit, giving insight into how other churches worship, witness and serve in their particular context.

I thank the Ecumenical Relations Committee, particularly the leadership of Rev Dr Clive Ayre, in helping advance and bear witness to the ecumenical imperative.

### **Interfaith relations**

While not specifically stated in the By-laws, the moderator inevitably becomes a significant connection point in this area.

The committee's report is to hand; my participation has been to encourage ministers and lay leaders to meet with leaders of other faiths, share stories of life and hope, and build bridges of understanding.

The Catholic Archbishop, the general secretary of QCT, and myself meet regularly with leaders from the Muslim community.

I have represented the Uniting Church in Australia at a number of interfaith gatherings and in gatherings with the state government.

I thank the committee, and particularly Rev Heather Griffin. Her enthusiasm for this work is inspiring.

### **Issues to do with the life of Queensland**

The Social Justice Reference Group has met twice since the last Synod. There have been challenges in finding representation, particularly a UAICC representative.

Representations to government have been made regarding the following matters:

- Coal seam gas exploration
- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Youth justice processes
- Abortion law reform.

Informal collaboration with interested parties has occurred regarding a potential Bill of Rights for Queensland.

I have been significantly involved in the leadership of the Queensland Community Alliance. This is an alliance of faith groups, community groups and unions to build and advance civil society. The alliance's community organising processes provide a wonderful opportunity for congregations to be involved in significant ministry in their communities alongside other community organisations.

## **Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse**

The Queensland Synod has been heavily involved in the church's response to the commission. The Interim Redress Scheme has involved me in a number of meetings with survivors to hear people's experiences, offer apology, hear feedback on the scheme, and to speak of what the church is doing now to ensure that child sexual abuse never occurs again.

## **Board for Christian Formation**

As an ex officio member of the board I have journeyed with the chairs, Rev Peter Lockhart and Rev Stuart Cameron, as the ministries it oversees (Trinity College Queensland, the Synod Selection Panel) have gone through significant transition.

## **Synod office**

Rev Heather den Houting's appointment as general secretary has seen the Synod office go through a major review of its operations and a restructure so that it is of better service to the life of the church in Queensland, and the Synod Standing Committee. Heather has provided consistent, disciplined, and innovative leadership through these changes.

# **Challenges/risks as we progress**

## **Presbyteries and congregations**

To build and support healthy Christian communities living the mission of the kingdom is a profound challenge; yet it is part of our core business. Presbyteries are experimenting with different models; the Board for Christian Formation is seeking to form leadership for this challenge. The cost of planting new ministry is substantial. The challenges of being church in rural and remote Queensland, finding models that are fruitful and sustainable in the context of reduced ecumenical engagement are significant; the work of the rural and remote task group will go on through the Presbytery/Synod Interface meetings.

We remain with the major risk that our congregational decline will continue. One underlying strategy is to provide presbyteries and congregations with greater flexibility so that they can exercise initiative to respond to their context. Presbyteries will need to continue to develop their capacity to lead, to initiate change, to redeploy resources if transformation and innovation are to be realised.

## **Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress**

The geographic location of much of UAICC's ministry in Queensland means that personal encounters are not easy; yet this is a prime means for each to understand the other. Another significant challenge is to develop leadership to serve across the UAICC's ministry. As we continue to journey with the First Peoples, we will be confronted with truths in our story that are challenging; we have all been caught up in the mission of God in Jesus Christ, which Paul described in his letter to the Corinthians as a ministry of reconciliation. Reconciliation with the First Peoples, and what that will mean, is a journey we must take as disciples in the gospel. As we take this journey, in faith, it will ultimately be a story of hope and joy for our life as a nation. Initial discussions between Synod and UAICC leadership in Queensland have occurred to scope out a framework for deepening our covenant.

## Ecumenical relations

- Re-energising traditional ecumenical organisations
- Provision of quality Religious Instruction across the state
- Building an effective voice for the churches in Queensland
- Bearing witness to that unity which is both Christ's gift and his will.

## Interfaith relations

- Building effective relationships locally and regionally to counter isolation and fear.

## The “common good” in Queensland

- Governments need our help to be just, fair, and to build the common good; they need the support of a committed, engaged, organised citizenry and community organisations whose values are informed by the gospel.
- Our community service agencies are under profound change; they need the support of the church to continue to deliver services which give practical effect to the good news of God's love for us in Christ.

## Royal Commission outcomes

- While the financial challenges of the outcomes of the royal commission are substantial, the challenge to “bear fruit worthy of repentance” is ours to do. It is about how we order our lives, it is also about a confidence that God is at work in God's world; it is about being “as gentle as doves and as wise as serpents”; that our spaces are safe for vulnerable people.

## Leadership and formation

- Growing leadership that is grounded in the gospel; that can “understand the times”, know its context and act accordingly.

## Synod office

- Building the capacity to provide relevant information to the Synod Standing Committee and the wider church on our context and the fruit of our mission.

The New Testament church's ministry could be broadly described by three dynamics:

- *Kerygma* – the proclamation of the gospel
- *Koinonia* – the building of gathered community and discipleship
- *Diakonia* – the offering to the world of acts of loving service to others.

The challenge of our life is that these three dynamics flow with each other; each need the other for the gospel to be proclaimed and encountered.

# Proposal

It is proposed that the 33rd Synod receive this report.

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## Contact for report questions:

Name: Rev David Baker  
Position: Moderator  
Email: [moderator@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:moderator@ucaqld.com.au) Phone: 3377 9705



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## Report from **Board for Christian Formation**

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### Context

The Board for Christian Formation (BCF) holds a range of responsibilities including the overview of the theological college of the Synod, selecting candidates for ministry, continuing education and reception of ministers. Trinity College Queensland (TCQ) is the Synod's primary vehicle for the delivery of education for ministry to achieve its vision to see a church that is formed for Christian mission.

The college is accountable to the BCF for delivering high quality outcomes in formation, teaching and learning, research and service across the broad range of education for ministry areas within the Queensland Synod.

As the BCF's newly appointed chairperson, I'd like to acknowledge the work done by the outgoing chairperson, Rev Peter Lockhart. Peter has led the BCF over a period of transformational change. In addition to the significant investment of his time over the past few years, Peter oversaw the implementation of changes to the future direction of the college.

## Highlights since last Synod

Since last Synod the main highlights within the BCF portfolio of responsibilities relate to the activities of Trinity College Queensland.

### 1. Implementation of the Future Ministry Model

Trinity College Queensland has focussed on the implementation of the Future Ministry Model endorsed by the BCF in June 2016. This model's key features include:

- Aspirational models of leadership
- Flexibility to meet the needs of a modern lifestyle
- Educational activities that produce mission-ready graduates
- A generous orthodoxy
- A rigorous academic education delivered by a lean and fit-for-purpose faculty to support Trinity College Queensland as it grows its capability to serve the educational needs of the church
- To enter formal negotiations with appropriate providers for the future accreditation of Trinity College Queensland.

### 2. Appointment of new faculty and staff

Over the past 12 months the BCF has appointed new faculty who are working within the Future Ministry Model. They also deliver lay education and offer models of leadership in addition to their work within accredited programs of study.

### 3. Development of new student catchments

The identification of a new supply of students is critical for securing TCQ's future. To this end the college has developed three student catchments and all are growing in attendance:

#### a. **Trinity Unplugged**

These events seek to ground people in their faith by addressing difficult questions that may confront people as they live out the life of Christian faith in a modern context. They also provide an opportunity to introduce people to learned approaches to reading and applying the Bible. We hope that over time the people attending these events may enrol in our short course program or apply to undertake accredited study.

#### b. **Trinity short courses**

The faculty of Trinity College Queensland offer short courses to people who would like to learn more about the Bible, theology, and the life of faith. We are particularly interested in attracting small groups from local congregations. We encourage groups such as these to take five weeks out of their regular weekly program and come along to Trinity to gain some input from our faculty.

#### c. **Academic courses for Lay Preacher's Certificate candidates**



In keeping with Assembly requirements the BCF has endorsed a suite of short courses and assessment methods to fulfil the academic training component of the Lay Preacher's Certificate. The college aims to provide lay preacher candidates with an educational experience that will encourage them to enrol in accredited courses.

#### **4. Increase of 200 per cent in students from Uniting Church congregations**

In second semester 2016 the college had 16.25 FTE students enrolled in its degree programs. The decision to dissolve our partnership with St Francis Theological College resulted in the loss of 10 FTE students who were training for ordination in the Anglican Church. Thus we expected that we would have as few as 6 FTE students in first semester 2017.

Though still relatively small numbers, the BCF was encouraged that the college enrolled 12.75 FTE students (made up of 29 different people) in Semester 1, 2017. At the time of writing this report we anticipate that our numbers will increase above 20 FTE students (made up of more than 40 different people) in Semester 2, 2017. We aim to attract more than 22 FTE enrolments in Semester 1, 2018.

#### **5. Continuing Education for Ministry (CEM) program**

Trinity College Queensland is offering people in placements unlimited access to our accredited courses in return for their CEM allowance plus 15 per cent of the advertised unit fee. This program of study allows a person to complete a masters for a quarter of the cost (based on a person studying at least two units/year). To be eligible a person must have finished a bachelor level theological degree or be an ordained Uniting Church minister.

#### **6. Dispersed learning**

The college seeks to disperse the learning of its faculty across the Synod's congregations, schools, and agencies. This semester it has entered into a memorandum of understanding with Sandgate Uniting Church to offer degree-level units on the latter's campus. The college intends to continue the initiative of previous Trinity leaders to establish regional learning hubs.

#### **7. Anticipated 2018 launch of *Activate* – Gap Year program**

See in report below.

#### **8. Launch of new Trinity College Queensland website**

[trinity.qld.edu.au](http://trinity.qld.edu.au)

#### **9. Christian Education curriculum**

The Trinity College Queensland faculty produced a Christian Education curriculum for Christian Schools Australia (CSA) and intends to offer professional development of people teaching this curriculum to CSA students.

# Priority Directions

## 1. Christ-centred, at prayer, and listening

The Future Ministry Model commits the college to modelling a generous orthodoxy. Our faculty are committed to upholding the creedal faith of the church as it has been received within our Reformed and Evangelical heritage. Such faith is inescapably Christ-centred and obliges us to offer units of study that focus on interpreting Christ in the scriptures and in fellowship with others who engage in this activity. We pray as a community, asking that the Spirit would help us to live like Christ.

## 2. Discipleship

The TCQ faculty is supporting discipleship in the following ways:

- a. Delivery of accredited courses
- b. Trinity Unplugged events aimed at grounding young people in their faith
- c. Launching of the *Activate* – Gap Year program for 18 to 23-year-olds in 2018
- d. Writing and supporting Religious Education curricula for schools
- e. Short courses that seek to develop frameworks for reading the Bible and serving in the local church
- f. Prioritising the interaction between faculty and students within the college community.

## 3. Leadership

The Synod's Leadership Development Framework has been incorporated into Trinity College Queensland's formation program.

## 4. Connecting with communities

- Raymont Residential College
- Religious and Christian Education frameworks for Uniting Church/ Christian Schools Australia schools
- Trinity Unplugged
- Research engagement.

## 5. Youth, children and families

- *Activate* – Gap Year program launches in 2018; this program seeks to mature young people in their faith as they move from home into a tertiary study or a career
- Trinity Unplugged
- Units within the Diploma and Bachelor of Ministry.

# Report

## I. BCF responsibilities

### 1. Scholarship aid and provision for candidates

Candidates are to be directed to raise issues of financial difficulty with their formation panel in the first place. These panels are presbytery-centric and this will facilitate a presbytery's consideration of whether it is in a position to provide financial assistance to the candidate. Where a presbytery determines that a candidate requires assistance but it is not in a position to provide this assistance, the person will be directed to engage with a process to be established by Synod's People and Culture team.

### 2. Synod Selection Panel

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Trinity College Queensland was realising a return on investment (ROI) of less than 10 per cent on its \$1.2 million expenditure.

### 2. Low student enrolments

The college had a low number of student enrolments. Moreover, of its 16.25 full-time equivalent (FTE) degree students, 10 were Anglican candidates for ordination.

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The key features of the Future Ministry Model have been listed above.

The implementation of each key aspect of the Future Ministry Model is reported below.

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The leadership aspirations of the Synod, together with a focus on the Synod's leadership framework have been reflected in our approach to appointing faculty.

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The college has developed the following capabilities:

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##### c. Dispersed learning hubs

#### 3. Educational activities that produce mission-ready graduates

The college has implemented the following activities for this purpose:

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In addition to the biblical, theological, and historical units offered within this degree, a number of additional units support the graduation of mission-ready people including: Introduction to Preaching; Reading Cultures; Spirituality for the 21st Century; Evangelism, Conversion, and the Mission of God; Homiletics; Pastoral Care.

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The new formation program (see below) concentrates a candidate's formation within his/her own missional context. Moreover, preaching workshops take up one third of the time students spend in formation intensives. An additional third of this time focusses on a student's development as an effective missional leader.

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Our formation panels (see below) will function as an accountability measure for ensuring that our ministry candidates graduate as mission-ready.

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The new timetabling enhances the interaction between students and faculty at morning tea and lunch.

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In addition to our accredited units on preaching, the faculty is encouraging students to enrol in voluntary preaching workshops as a way of honing their preaching skills.

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This aspect of the Future Ministry Model was adopted for at least two reasons. First, the concept resonates with our *Basis of Union*. Second, it tends to disrupt a tendency to situate our college somewhere on a spectrum of orthodoxy. Rather than have people characterise us as liberal, conservative, progressive or otherwise, our college claims that we occupy the centre of orthodoxy as defined by the early church creeds and received within the Reformed and Evangelical traditions.

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The restructuring that the BCF approved in July last year reduced the college's expenditure by more than \$200,000/year. The 2018 budget deficit is \$1,050,961 and this is 10.4 per cent lower than that budgeted for the 2017 financial year (\$1,172,530). If the college achieves its goal of increasing FTE enrolments in accredited courses from 16 to 40 by the end of 2019, it will reduce this deficit by a further 20 per cent.

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#### **a. Short courses**

The total enrolments in lay education courses in 2016 was fewer than 40. We have already had 35 enrolments in our short courses this semester and we anticipate that we will more than double last year's enrolment numbers by the end of 2017.

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See point I.4 above in Highlights.

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The Queensland Synod has eight candidates for ministry and we expect as many as two of these will exit into placement at the end of this year. Nine candidates are being interviewed by the Synod Selection Panel in November. Thus, we expect the number of candidates to increase in 2018.

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- A high degree of flexibility that allows regional students to complete the program without having to move to Brisbane.
- A sense among candidates that their requests for Recognised Prior Learning and Recognised Prior Experience receive due and fair consideration.

The meeting of these objectives is based upon three foundational components of the formation program. The resources section of the Trinity College Queensland website will serve as the repository for the relevant formation documents as they become available.

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The Dean of Formation and Dispersed Learning is in the process of developing a supervised placement program that empowers a ministry placement supervisor to oversee most of a candidate's formation as a mission-ready church leader.

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Formation intensives occur on eight Mondays each year. The time students spend during these days is equally allocated to (a) preaching, (b) leadership, (c) other issues relating to formation that are not easily addressed within a candidate's missional context (e.g. Aboriginal religion and spirituality).

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Trinity College Queensland will launch a new initiative in 2018 to help ground a younger generation of people in their faith. *Activate* is a one-year, three-day-per-week program for school leavers and those within the age range of initial tertiary study (approximately 18–23 years). It provides an enjoyable opportunity to experience purposeful learning and spiritual growth in the context of a vibrant Christian community. Throughout the year students will complete a Diploma of Ministry, accredited first aid course, mental health first aid course, barista course, safe driving course, financial budgeting/study skills/time management program, SU Queensland camp leaders training.

## VIII. Chaplaincy education

The changes made at Trinity College Queensland include the outsourcing of the Cert IV in Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care to National Training Solutions. As part of our dispersed learning program, the college is presently working with UnitingCare, Wesley Mission Queensland and the Chaplaincy Commission to develop educational resources for our Synod's chaplains.

# Challenges/risks as we progress

Our effort to redevelop Trinity College Queensland as the key educational resource for seeing a church formed for mission is faced with the following challenges:

## 1. The development of a new supply of students

The intention of attracting students from across the breadth of the Uniting Church creates the following challenges for Trinity College Queensland:

- a. The clarification of our identity as a college which seeks to ground people in their faith and equip them with tools for lifelong ministry.
- b. The development of effective student catchments which offer aspirational models of preaching, creating an appetite for theological education at the grassroots level of our congregations (e.g. short courses and Trinity Unplugged).
- c. Provision of a first-rate and flexible educational service for potential students.
- d. The development of deep relationships with presbyteries and congregations.

## 2. Reducing TCQ's budget deficit

The Synod has indicated that the college must demonstrate that it can move toward financial independence before the end of 2019. In addition to renewing a reliable supply line of students, the college is meeting this challenge by engaging in the following activities:

- a. Developing its value offering to potential students.
- b. The identification of new educational markets such as the resourcing of Christian education in schools (e.g. professional development and published resources).
- c. The development of learning hubs for the offering of accredited courses.

## 3. Mix of faculty at Trinity College Queensland

The BCF defines the required mix of faculty as that which best supports the Future Ministry Model's implementation. Nevertheless, it desires to see female academics represented on this faculty and where possible, people representing our movement's multicultural groups. In the short term, the college has scope for appointing suitable adjuncts who are female and/or from multicultural backgrounds. In the longer term, the director has proposed to implement an operational strategy for identifying and resourcing the emergence of future female and/or multicultural full-time faculty members.

# Recommendations

1. Records its thanks and appreciation for the faithful service through Trinity College Queensland of the following people:
  - a) Rev Dr Wendi Sargeant, faculty member and Director of Studies in Apologetics and Evangelism
  - b) Dr Aaron Ghiloni, faculty member and Director of Studies in Mission, Ministry and Leadership
  - c) Dr Jason LeCureux, faculty member and Director of Old Testament Studies
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  - e) Rev Mel Perkins, faculty member and Adult Faith Educator
  - f) Rev Lynne Gibson, Chaplaincy Educator
  - g) Mrs Lyndelle Gunton, Manager, Trinity Theological Library
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2. Records its thanks and appreciation for the faithful service given by Rev Dr Elizabeth Nolan and Rev Linda Hanson as members of the Board for Christian Formation.
3. Records its appreciation to Rev Peter Lockhart as Chairperson, Board for Christian Formation, through a Minute of Appreciation.

# Proposal

It is proposed that the 33rd Synod receive this report.

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## Contact for report questions:

Name: Stu Cameron  
Position: Chair, Board for Christian Formation  
Email: stucameron@church.nu Phone: (07) 5578 9322





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## Report from **Board for Christian Formation**

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### Context

The Board for Christian Formation (BCF) holds a range of responsibilities including the overview of the theological college of the Synod, selecting candidates for ministry, continuing education and reception of ministers. Trinity College Queensland (TCQ) is the Synod's primary vehicle for the delivery of education for ministry to achieve its vision to see a church that is formed for Christian mission.

The college is accountable to the BCF for delivering high quality outcomes in formation, teaching and learning, research and service across the broad range of education for ministry areas within the Queensland Synod.

As the BCF's newly appointed chairperson, I'd like to acknowledge the work done by the outgoing chairperson, Rev Peter Lockhart. Peter has led the BCF over a period of transformational change. In addition to the significant investment of his time over the past few years, Peter oversaw the implementation of changes to the future direction of the college.

## Highlights since last Synod

Since last Synod the main highlights within the BCF portfolio of responsibilities relate to the activities of Trinity College Queensland.

### 1. Implementation of the Future Ministry Model

Trinity College Queensland has focussed on the implementation of the Future Ministry Model endorsed by the BCF in June 2016. This model's key features include:

- Aspirational models of leadership
- Flexibility to meet the needs of a modern lifestyle
- Educational activities that produce mission-ready graduates
- A generous orthodoxy
- A rigorous academic education delivered by a lean and fit-for-purpose faculty to support Trinity College Queensland as it grows its capability to serve the educational needs of the church
- To enter formal negotiations with appropriate providers for the future accreditation of Trinity College Queensland.

### 2. Appointment of new faculty and staff

Over the past 12 months the BCF has appointed new faculty who are working within the Future Ministry Model. They also deliver lay education and offer models of leadership in addition to their work within accredited programs of study.

### 3. Development of new student catchments

The identification of a new supply of students is critical for securing TCQ's future. To this end the college has developed three student catchments and all are growing in attendance:

#### a. **Trinity Unplugged**

These events seek to ground people in their faith by addressing difficult questions that may confront people as they live out the life of Christian faith in a modern context. They also provide an opportunity to introduce people to learned approaches to reading and applying the Bible. We hope that over time the people attending these events may enrol in our short course program or apply to undertake accredited study.

#### b. **Trinity short courses**

The faculty of Trinity College Queensland offer short courses to people who would like to learn more about the Bible, theology, and the life of faith. We are particularly interested in attracting small groups from local congregations. We encourage groups such as these to take five weeks out of their regular weekly program and come along to Trinity to gain some input from our faculty.

c. **Academic courses for Lay Preacher's Certificate candidates**

In keeping with Assembly requirements the BCF has endorsed a suite of short courses and assessment methods to fulfil the academic training component of the Lay Preacher's Certificate. The college aims to provide lay preacher candidates with an educational experience that will encourage them to enrol in accredited courses.

**4. Increase of 200 per cent in students from Uniting Church congregations**

In second semester 2016 the college had 16.25 FTE students enrolled in its degree programs. The decision to dissolve our partnership with St Francis Theological College resulted in the loss of 10 FTE students who were training for ordination in the Anglican Church. Thus we expected that we would have as few as 6 FTE students in first semester 2017.

Though still relatively small numbers, the BCF was encouraged that the college enrolled 12.75 FTE students (made up of 29 different people) in Semester 1, 2017. At the time of writing this report we anticipate that our numbers will increase above 20 FTE students (made up of more than 40 different people) in Semester 2, 2017. We aim to attract more than 22 FTE enrolments in Semester 1, 2018.

**5. Continuing Education for Ministry (CEM) program**

Trinity College Queensland is offering people in placements unlimited access to our accredited courses in return for their CEM allowance plus 15 per cent of the advertised unit fee. This program of study allows a person to complete a masters for a quarter of the cost (based on a person studying at least two units/year). To be eligible a person must have finished a bachelor level theological degree or be an ordained Uniting Church minister.

**6. Dispersed learning**

The college seeks to disperse the learning of its faculty across the Synod's congregations, schools, and agencies. This semester it has entered into a memorandum of understanding with Sandgate Uniting Church to offer degree-level units on the latter's campus. The college intends to continue the initiative of previous Trinity leaders to establish regional learning hubs.

**7. Anticipated 2018 launch of *Activate* – Gap Year program**

See in report below.

**8. Launch of new Trinity College Queensland website**

[trinity.qld.edu.au](http://trinity.qld.edu.au)

**9. Christian Education curriculum**

The Trinity College Queensland faculty produced a Christian Education curriculum for Christian Schools Australia (CSA) and intends to offer professional development of people teaching this curriculum to CSA students.

# Priority Directions

## 1. Christ-centred, at prayer, and listening

The Future Ministry Model commits the college to modelling a generous orthodoxy. Our faculty are committed to upholding the creedal faith of the church as it has been received within our Reformed and Evangelical heritage. Such faith is inescapably Christ-centred and obliges us to offer units of study that focus on interpreting Christ in the scriptures and in fellowship with others who engage in this activity. We pray as a community, asking that the Spirit would help us to live like Christ.

## 2. Discipleship

The TCQ faculty is supporting discipleship in the following ways:

- a. Delivery of accredited courses
- b. Trinity Unplugged events aimed at grounding young people in their faith
- c. Launching of the *Activate* – Gap Year program for 18 to 23-year-olds in 2018
- d. Writing and supporting Religious Education curricula for schools
- e. Short courses that seek to develop frameworks for reading the Bible and serving in the local church
- f. Prioritising the interaction between faculty and students within the college community.

## 3. Leadership

The Synod's Leadership Development Framework has been incorporated into Trinity College Queensland's formation program.

## 4. Connecting with communities

- Raymont Residential College
- Religious and Christian Education frameworks for Uniting Church/ Christian Schools Australia schools
- Trinity Unplugged
- Research engagement.

## 5. Youth, children and families

- *Activate* – Gap Year program launches in 2018; this program seeks to mature young people in their faith as they move from home into a tertiary study or a career
- Trinity Unplugged
- Units within the Diploma and Bachelor of Ministry.

# Report

## I. BCF responsibilities

### 1. Scholarship aid and provision for candidates

Candidates are to be directed to raise issues of financial difficulty with their formation panel in the first place. These panels are presbytery-centric and this will facilitate a presbytery's consideration of whether it is in a position to provide financial assistance to the candidate. Where a presbytery determines that a candidate requires assistance but it is not in a position to provide this assistance, the person will be directed to engage with a process to be established by Synod's People and Culture team.

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# Challenges/risks as we progress

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# Recommendations

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  - b) Dr Aaron Ghiloni, faculty member and Director of Studies in Mission, Ministry and Leadership
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3. Records its appreciation to Rev Peter Lockhart as Chairperson, Board for Christian Formation, through a Minute of Appreciation.

# Proposal

It is proposed that the 33rd Synod receive this report.

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## Contact for report questions:

Name: Stu Cameron  
Position: Chair, Board for Christian Formation  
Email: stucameron@church.nu Phone: (07) 5578 9322



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## Report from

# Finance Investment and Property (FIP) Board

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## Context

The Finance Investment and Property Board (FIP Board) has a range of responsibilities set out in the Regulations and By-laws:

- Perform the functions of the Synod Property Board under Regulation 4.2.1
- Exercise oversight of the activities of the financial transactions and investments body (UCIS/Treasury) under Regulation 3.7.4.6
- Exercise oversight of strategic resource plans, audit and risk management for the Synod under Regulation 4.2.1 (h).

Members during the last term were:

- Ralph Collins (chairperson)
- Ian Busch
- Hayden Gaffel
- Rev Linda Hamill
- Allan Hanson
- Howard Morrison
- Rev David Baker – moderator (ex officio)
- Rev Heather den Houting – general secretary (ex officio)
- Peter Cranna – Synod property officer (ex officio).

# Report

The key achievements over the last term include:

1. Developed and approved Synod-wide policies:
  - a. Synod Property and Other Delegations Policy (including the UnitingCare Queensland (UCQ) Delegations framework as a schedule).
  - b. Synod Documents Execution Policy.

These new policies streamline the delegations framework for UCQ and align to the revised UCQ Constitution.

2. Approved the delegations matrix for the Synod office which was then attached to the Synod Property and Other Delegations Policy as a new schedule.
3. Approved a revised Synod-wide Treasury Policy. This policy allows investment into equities through selected managed funds that comply with the Synod Ethical Investment Policy. Some Synod funds will be invested in 2017/18, and this fund may be made available to other church bodies at some future stage, after recognising the short-term risk that these investments introduce. Over the long term (7+ years) these investments are expected to generate higher than cash returns.
4. Authorisation letters issued to CEO, CFO and Director–Governance at UCQ under the provisions of the Synod Documents Execution Policy. These letters streamline processes for signing standard documents.
5. Based on cash flow forecasts, reduced the external debt facility to \$5m for 2016/17, saving over \$300,000 in fees.
6. Provided Standing Committee with a five-year trend analysis on all aspects of the statutory financial statements (including the Synod office, presbytery funding), including detail on the allocation to equity reserves.
7. Continued the rebuild of the Synod Reserve Fund – the emergency fund for the Synod. This is a 10-year strategy, monitored by the FIP Board.
8. Finalised a Stewardship Fee Agreement with UCQ and determined the figure of \$8.8m payable to the Synod office under the agreement for 2017/18. The stewardship fee replaces the margins on the finances managed through the Synod office. Stewardship Fee Agreements/other funding methodologies will be discussed with church bodies over the next term to discern suitability.
9. Created a sensitive matters equity reserve with an initial allocation of \$5m in 2017/18. This was a risk-based assessment after consideration of current claims.
10. Monitored the progress to obtain a Development Approval from the Sunshine Coast Regional Council for the Alexandra Park Conference Centre site. This is a multi-option project undertaken to protect the value of the site and determine the best future use to benefit the Synod. Options are expected to be developed, analysed and presented to Synod Standing Committee during the next Synodial term.
11. Throughout the term, approved property transactions received from church bodies across the Synod.

12. Monitored the work of the Synod Audit Risk and Oversight Committee (SAROC):
- a. SAROC encouraged the development of a Synod-wide and a Synod office risk framework and register. These activities are underway.
  - b. The external financial audit for the Synod office has been put to tender in conjunction with UCQ and Wesley Mission Queensland (WMQ). Outcomes unknown at the date of this report.
13. Audited financial statements for the Synod office are due to be signed on 20 October 2017. Copies can be made available to interested people at Synod in Session after the FIP Board presentation has been delivered. Please contact Peter Cranna.

## Challenges/risks as we progress

Good stewardship of church assets and funds is a primary focus of the FIP Board. The FIP Board demonstrates this by:

- Seeking investments that balance the risk/return equation and increase revenue into the church
- Making available (within its power and responsibilities) funds that are used to grow the mission of the church.

Challenges and priorities for the FIP Board are to:

- Develop a property strategy that ensures property is used for missional purposes and to increase the sustainability of the church
- Revise and renew policies to meet the missional and sustainability objectives of the church today
- Address situations with church bodies where the debt/growth ratio needs to be actively managed over the long term
- Build on the Stewardship Fee Agreement with UCQ and develop models with other church bodies to help fund the Synod office.

## Proposal

It is proposed that the 33rd Synod receive this report.

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### Contact for report questions:

Name: Ralph Collins  
Position: Chairperson – Finance Investment and Property Board  
Email: [finprop@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:finprop@ucaqld.com.au) Phone: 07 3377 9865



# #realunitingchurch

## Report from the General secretary



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### Context

The general secretary is the executive officer of the Synod and has executive leadership and advisory roles and is responsible for the functioning of the Synod office. Synod-wide activities are overseen and resourced through the Synod office where appropriate.

The functions of the Synod office are driven by the imperative to resource the whole of the church in Queensland. These areas can be divided into:

1. Those activities where a Synod responsibility is required to be exercised under the constitution and regulations, and
2. Where it is reasonable to expect the operation at a Synod level is the best use of shared resources.

The new strategic plan for the Synod office operations focusses on four broad areas where we can best make a valued contribution in the life of the church. These are in providing shared services, in identifying sustainable practices, in encouraging collaboration across the church and in demonstrating and facilitating leadership in the church. This report has collated our activities under these themes.

## Priority Directions

During the last 18 months the work on the Synod's priority directions has been done in collaboration with the Synod Standing Committee and the Presbytery/Synod Interface. This culminated in the discernment of four key change initiatives which will guide the resourcing decisions being made at the Synod level. This material is more explicitly outlined in the Standing Committee report.

Major transformational work is still occurring across Synod-based enterprises. Each piece is driven by the imperative that the Queensland Synod is in a process of transition. More information about the range of factors influencing us at this time can be found in the report #realunitingchurch available here <https://ucaqlld.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Report-on-Syond-wide-mission-implementation-strategies-V2.pdf>

## Report

### Service

#### 1. Royal Commission

In September 2016 the Queensland Government released an issues paper titled "The civil litigation recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse: Redress and Civil Litigation Report – understanding the Queensland context". We have continued to be in contact with the state government since that time to give feedback on the breadth of any proposals that might come forward as a result.

In late 2016 we became aware that a hearing would be commenced into allegations of abuse of a young person at Shalom Christian College. We supported and resourced witnesses to give evidence at that hearing. Findings from the commission were provided to us in December 2016. The full submissions from the hearing are due to be published in September 2017.

Nationally, the Uniting Church was invited to make submissions to the commission in March 2017. The National Task Group formed a working group which gathered all policies and procedures relating to child protection across the breadth of activities of the church, and identified actions that the synods and their entities had undertaken as a result of the Royal Commission reports.

The Uniting Church in Australia appeared at the Royal Commission on the afternoon of 10 March 2017. Statements about the operations of church practices were tendered by Stuart McMillan, Colleen Geyer, Anne Cross and Rev Heather den Houting. The experience provided valuable insights into the firm convictions of the commissioners about proposed ways forward for church institutions.

Final reports from the commission are likely in December 2017. The Assembly Standing Committee agreed that Assembly's Royal Commission task worker would continue until end 2019 and the Queensland task group is expected to continue to meet for that extended time.

We also provided clear and updated figures to the commission as to the number and nature of claims against the church since 1977 and this will be contained in the final report.

## **2. Interim Redress Scheme**

As part of our response to the Royal Commission's recommendations we instituted an interim redress scheme which was operational by September 2016. Details of the scheme can be found at [www.ucaqld.com.au/interim-redress/](http://www.ucaqld.com.au/interim-redress/) The public statement around the scheme is as follows:

*The Uniting Church in Queensland is committed to doing all that we can to provide fair, consistent and compassionate redress for people who were sexually abused as children in our care.*

*The Uniting Church will not hide from the truth, however painful that may be, and will seek to address issues and challenges with compassion and humility.*

*We will say sorry to anyone who was sexually abused while in our care and, in consultation with those affected, actively seek ways to make amends for what happened in the past and identify how we can best offer support into the future.*

Each applicant is dealt with as an individual and the intent of the scheme is to be survivor/applicant focussed. However, some trends can be identified:

- Abuse occurred in both congregations and residential facilities.
- We are dealing with both pre- and post-union matters.
- We do not have blanket insurance across all the incidences reported to us.
- Forty people have applied to date.
- We have paid 23 settlements.
- We have seen an increase in potential/actual civil litigation.
- We have seen an increase in complaints through our church processes.
- We have seen an increase in police reporting and potential for court processes.

A one-year review of the scheme is about to be instituted.

Further, we are involved in discussions around a national strategy on how the Uniting Church in Australia might opt in to the commonwealth scheme. Any decision will have implications for resource allocation for the Synod.

## **3. Open Data Project**

The Open Data Project was researched and resourced and the website to house this data went live in February 2017. The statistics for the website for the period March to June 2017 are:

- 8364 views to the registration webpage (or homepage)
- 16 registered users
- 18 downloads for the document: De-identified Open Data – Presbytery Annual Returns 2013/2014/2015
- No reports have yet been submitted to the Synod office.

The site can be found here: [www.ucaqld.com.au/synod-services/open-data/](http://www.ucaqld.com.au/synod-services/open-data/)

## **4. Synod office**

An investigation into the Synod office in September 2016 revealed a range of different issues relating to its business maturity. To this end a program of work commenced to introduce



business-level improvements. During this process, staff have been actively engaged and kept informed of the changes.

A vision for the Synod office to be “a service-oriented organisation that is fiscally viable and responsible, continually improving and sustainable in terms of the service and value provided to the broader church” was a starting position. To assist with this, a Business Change and Transition Manager was appointed for a period of 12 months.

An Executive Management Team (EMT) was developed in November 2016 and a new operational framework was developed from an enterprise architecture approach.

In February 2017 the EMT commenced the process of designing the Synod office business model. The Synod office strategy-on-a-page, which emphasised the required responsiveness of the Synod office to the needs of all church stakeholders, was presented in April 2017. This was updated after May 2017 to incorporate the four Key Change Initiatives developed jointly by the Synod Standing Committee (SSC) and the presbytery ministers.

The new business model was implemented in July 2017. The model is intended to ensure the Synod office will assist the church to:

- Develop and resource mission and enterprise strategies that enable it to grow, transition and innovate.
- Strategically manage church resources through a whole-of-Synod vision and stewardship model that can fund the needs of mission today but with an eye on the future.
- Provide the necessary corporate services and machinery (ICT, information reporting and data management and appropriate compliance processes and risk protection for the church) so that all church stakeholders are better enabled to do mission.

In July and August 2017 we also finalised the stewardship agreement with UnitingCare Queensland (UCQ) and had a Treasury Investment policy approved.

The future work of the Synod office has been reported and will be measured against the frameworks outlined in the document #realunitingchurch [https://ucaqld.com.au/wp-content/uploads/dlm\\_uploads/2017/08/Report-on-Synod-wide-mission-implementation-strategies.pdf](https://ucaqld.com.au/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2017/08/Report-on-Synod-wide-mission-implementation-strategies.pdf)

## **5. National Church Life Survey**

Around 60 per cent of Queensland congregations enrolled in the survey. This was regarded as a great response rate by the NCLS crew and gave us some good data about our current state of congregational life in Queensland. Census data was also collected in October/November and made available in April 2017. The report made to the Synod Standing Committee and the presbytery ministers is attached at Appendix A. This material is being used to resource our next steps in planning for the church.

## **6. Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission**

The Annual Information Statements lodgements for the year ended 31 December 2016 were submitted by 30 June 2017. Lodgements were required for 204 entities and the same risk-based approaches were taken as per the prior year.

## **7. Civil litigation against the Synod**

By June 2017, we had received 12 *Personal Injuries Proceedings Act* (PIPA) notices, with one other in the pipeline. Some of these claims may be uninsured which will require appropriate provisioning within the church. This is clearly an area that is rising in consequence for us and

strategic planning for managing this, including a MOU with the Presbyterians and significant work on “who was responsible” with other entities is required.

## **8. Disaster relief**

As a result of Cyclone Debbie we activated the disaster relief plans and an appeal was launched on 30 March 2017. Almost \$100,000 was raised with disbursements for short-term accommodation costs and purchase of supplies such as generators, pedestal fans, jerry cans etc. for the Bowen and Proserpine communities as well as paying relief grants to those communities that applied. Funding is also supporting a full-time disaster recovery chaplain in the affected communities. We have also contracted Rev Linda Hamill as a short-term project worker in this space to develop the business capacity to provide a comprehensive and coherent response to future incidents.

## **9. Child Safe Church**

### **a) Safe Ministry with Children Policy**

The Safe Ministry with Children Policy was reviewed during the term and the updated policy was approved by the SSC in March 2017. A final report was received by the SSC in August 2017 and is attached to this report at Attachment B.

### **b) Blue Card audit compliance and audit**

The Synod has an obligation to ensure that any ministry agent in active service has a compliant Blue Card and has worked with presbytery ministers to ensure this has occurred across the state. The compliance and audit function of the Synod will continue and will be regularly monitored. The Synod has also asked that each ministry agent complete and consent to reveal details to the Synod form. This means the Synod is able to enquire into circumstances where a Blue Card might be suspended.

## **Sustainability**

### **1. Improved governance of the Synod Standing Committee**

#### **a) Reporting**

Improvements were made to the agenda and templates for the SSC meetings to streamline meeting processes and ensure meeting time continues to be focussed on key strategic and risk matters. This has empowered the SSC to make more efficient and effective decisions.

#### **b) Skill set audit**

A skill set audit of the SSC was conducted following the 32nd Synod and this showed that the highest level of skills and experience exist in the areas of congregational leadership, strategic planning, theological expertise and governance and not-for-profit experience. The lowest level of skills and experience exist in the areas of legal expertise, evangelism expertise, indigenous expertise and a youth perspective. It is recognised that further work is required to consider strategies for the establishment of a candidate pool for membership on Synod boards, committees and commissions. As a first step in addressing the skills set of potential members, nominees to roles appointed at the 33rd Synod were asked to advise of their gifts and skills across a broader range of desired metrics.

#### **c) Review of boards, committees and commissions**

A consultant was commissioned to undertake a review of the By-laws and governance model of the Synod boards, committees and commissions (except UCQ). The outcomes of this review culminated in a number of recommendations which are outlined in a

separate proposal to the 33rd Synod titled “Queensland Synod Governance Structure Changes”.

d) **Diversity Task Group**

A Diversity Task Group was convened to address the 32nd Synod resolution with respect to diverse representation on the boards, committees and commissions of the Synod. Various strategies are in place to address this important piece of work and the SSC report to the 33rd Synod reports back on this matter.

**2. Enterprise Risk Framework**

The instigation of a risk group in the Synod office is designed to ensure that our legal, compliance and risk obligations across all aspects of the church are being adequately resourced and overseen.

**3. Schools and Residential Colleges**

a) **Grace College constitution**

The Grace College constitution was revised and approved by the SSC in February 2016 and subsequently approved by the other institutional stakeholders, coming into effect from 2 May 2017.

b) **Emmanuel College constitution**

The Emmanuel College constitution was revised and approved by the SSC in August 2017. It has not yet been approved by the Presbyterian Church and is not in effect.

c) **Shalom Christian College**

Commencing in October 2016 a comprehensive analysis of the Synod’s missional, business, risk and strategic frameworks relating to the college was undertaken. In April 2017 the Shalom Christian College Renewal Strategy was approved and recommendations will be presented in November 2017.

d) **Wontulp Bi-Buya College**

A new constitution and the incorporation of Wontulp Bi-Buya College Limited was approved by the SSC in April 2016. After some issues with accreditation, all courses are accredited and there is a new strategic planning process in place.

**4. Mission and ministries**

a) **Presbytery reviews/Review of Life and Mission of Presbyteries**

In January 2016 the Queensland Synod engaged Carolyn Kitto of Spirited Consulting to conduct a review of the life and mission of the Queensland presbyteries. The purpose of the review was to build an overview of current practices and establish key priorities and actions for the coming 3-5 years.

Throughout 2016 each presbytery was visited and engaged. In December 2016 a report, including recommendations, was made to the Presbytery/Synod Interface. This report was considered by presbytery ministers at their retreat in February 2017 which led to some creative and strategic thinking and planning.

The elements that relate to specific presbyteries will be dealt with by those presbyteries, however the broad overview was useful background for the Synod Standing Committee in developing their strategic thinking.

b) **Chaplaincy Affirmation Days**

Three days of training were held from 26-28 October 2016 for chaplains from across the state. The days were well attended and the key note speaker Dr Bruce Stevens, Wicking Professor of Ageing and Practical Theology and director of CAPS offered great insight into the psychological and therapeutic effects of spiritual work.

c) **Review of Ministry Agent Payment and Benefits**

At their meeting of 23 November 2016 the GNRC considered the Review of Ministry Agent Payment and Benefits Decision Paper. The SSC approved the recommendations of the paper at their 6 April 2017 meeting. HR manager Grant Weaver has responsibility for the roll-out of the practical implications of these recommendations.

d) **Non-congregational placement terminations**

In August 2016 the SSC discussed the termination of non-congregational placement processes. A policy on the termination of non-congregational placements is going to the GNRC in August 2017 for recommendation to the SSC in September 2017.

e) **Placements review**

A review task group produced a placements survey in late 2014, a consultation paper in March 2016 and a placements review report in May 2016. Having considered the responses from all these documents the task group released a placements process review discussion paper that included a proposal for an optional dual track process. The task group took the revised proposal to Placements Committee and a recommendation was presented to SSC in August 2017. The optional dual track placements process was approved by the SSC for a trial period of three years commencing 1 January 2018.

f) **#realunitingchurch Queensland Synod Report on Implementation of Strategy and Mission**

In order to ensure that all parts of the church are adequately informed of the strategic issues facing the Queensland Synod, pertinent information as to the status of the activities of the Synod have been drawn together into the #realunitingchurch report. This is intended to be a living document which will be reviewed and updated annually by the general secretary. It explains where the resources of the church are being directed and provides a framework for measuring the strategic success of each venture.

## Collaboration

### 1. 40th anniversary – Uniting Church in Australia

The Synod office supported 40th anniversary celebrations across Uniting churches in Queensland and the moderator and the general secretary gathered together in Melbourne to participate in the 40 Hours of Prayer event. The 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary sparked some strategic thinking about how we document and archive the important material that has emerged from our last 40 years as a church. This is particularly pertinent as we recognise the time of transformation we are currently experiencing. Some early work is being done around the establishment of an historical archive to protect artefacts and memorabilia, and there is some enthusiasm around a project to develop a creative community engagement space to tell the stories of the last four decades of the Uniting Church.

### 2. Uniting Women Conference 2018

The Queensland Synod will host the third biannual Uniting Women's Conference in Brisbane from 20–23 September 2018. The previous two events have generated high levels of attendance, enthusiasm, cooperation and leadership development across the church. The theme of the 2018 event is: Weaving wisdom and wonder.

### **3. Uniting Church in Australia (national)**

The Uniting Church is a national body and the health and strategy of the church at the Assembly level is supported by a collaborative approach across synods. Some of the key issues arising at Assembly level have been:

- Frontier Services and its fundraising mandate
- a national framework for remote area ministry
- changes to the Regulations re the duties and functions of general secretaries to make them consistent with the Assembly general secretary position
- change to the Regulations re the ministry of pastor (including removal of Pastor B)
- changes to Regulations re withdrawal of recognition after a conviction relating to a child sexual offence
- Royal Commission responses
- national cooperation with Assembly and synods
- Assembly resourcing
- status of current national procurement opportunities/contracts
- documenting “back of house” functions nationally
- National Leadership Framework
- documenting where cooperation in theological education is already happening and identifying gaps for broader use
- marriage conversations
- sovereignty and treaty conversations
- national incorporation conversations
- national standards of ministry practice and discipline of ministry agents project
- preparation for Assembly 2018.

### **4. Recapturing our Souls conference**

The moderator, general secretary, Anne Cross, Heather Watson, Rev Jenny Tymms, Bruce Moore and Rev Keren Seto attended this conference in September 2016. The learnings from the conference were around developing a culture and training for ministry in non-congregational settings. We resolved to ensure the places and spaces for deep conversation about the nature and the future of the church were held and this was absorbed into the Key Change Initiatives of the Synod.

## **Leadership**

### **1. Leadership development**

A framework was created to guide and support the development of leadership capabilities needed to rise to the current and future challenges of the church in the Queensland Synod. The process of development included an evaluation of around 20 leadership frameworks mainly in the helping, government and not-for-profit areas (Australian and international); a literature review on leadership development; presentation/consultation to a variety of stakeholders including presbytery ministers, leadership development program group, Trinity staff and Synod leaders; and a comparison with other models across the synods.

Reviewers were unable to locate similar leadership frameworks from a church perspective, noting that leadership development programs are not frameworks. The draft framework was presented to the SSC in August 2016 and approved in November 2016. The framework has been offered to the national church for consideration as part of our collaborative strategies. The framework and accompanying tools can be located here: <https://ucaqld.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/UCA-Leadership-Devt-Framework-V1.pdf>

We have also entered into an agreement with the South Australian Synod to deliver a range of leadership development programs, including the Uniting Leaders Conference, Uniting Leaders network executive leadership courses and to develop some leadership consulting capacity. This work builds into the broad strategy for leadership development across the national church.

## **2. Graduate Leadership Program**

The first cohort from this program graduated in mid-2017. Two further cohorts are continuing their studies. The next cohort will be selected to begin the program in early 2018. Each cohort consists of around 14 participants. The programs works with people from within the Uniting Church to develop their strategic leadership skills within a Uniting Church ethos.

## **3. Youth strategy**

### **a) Next Gen leadership**

A new 0.25 position was created to assist the Multi Cross Cultural Reference Group to equip next generation leaders in the CALD communities. This position reports to the associate general secretary. In consultation with the Multi Cross Cultural Reference Group, Noah Kim commenced in mid-September 2016 and began mapping out an appropriate program of work. This is being seen through the Next Gen Arise program, details of which can be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/nextgenarise/>

### **b) Easter Madness**

The Easter Madness project embarked on an early advertising campaign, including fundraising to assist those from outside of the South East Queensland corner to attend the camp, with the pay-off seeing the camp oversubscribed with 218 registered delegates (planning was for 180!) The success was due in no small part to the collaborative genius of the organising team. The program will occur again in 2018.

### **c) Digital Youth Discipleship**

Steve Molkentin commenced in October 2016 in a full-time position as the Digital Youth Discipleship Officer. A major platform of the work *BreadFishToo* was launched at Easter Madness 2017 — a digital community targeted at a dispersed community. This is a chance for young people to be a part of ‘bigger’ church, no matter where they are.

### **d) Country Madness**

In April 2017 the Country Madness team gathered at Seaforth (near Mackay). They had 34 campers registered from Mackay, Townsville and Sarina; 16 leaders and two guests (keynote teacher and support person) from Melbourne. Gathering 52 people for this camp is a great effort for a first-time event.

## Challenges/risks as we progress

The lack of strategic frameworks for a number of our significant activities is a real risk. The question about how we are a church in the community is one that needs to be addressed at all levels of the church, including the Synod where significant resources are utilised.

The unsustainability of our current funding models is also a matter that requires significant work, but must be tied to the development of comprehensive strategies for the whole of the church response to its current challenges.

This work will be the primary focus for the general secretary over the next term.

## Proposal

It is proposed that the 33rd Synod receive this report.

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### Contact for report questions:

Name: Rev Heather den Houting

Position: General Secretary

Email: [heather.denhouting@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:heather.denhouting@ucaqld.com.au)

Phone: 07 3377 9702

# FINAL REPORT



## PURPOSE:

The Safe Ministry with Children final report summarises the history, learnings, and achievements of the Queensland Synod's investment in this area of work. It provides projections relating to ongoing requirements for meeting obligations under the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act, 2000* (the Act) and *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation, 2011* (the Regulation) in a sustainable and demonstrable manner.

## BACKGROUND:

The Queensland Synod has invested in providing support for safe ministry with children over several decades. The brief history 'snap shot' is outlined in Table 1 below. Within this context, the current report is focused on the period from July 2014 to July 2017, and will outline the progress of the work undertaken during that timeframe. The current report will focus on the achievements, challenges, learnings and recommendations of the preceding work, with a view to informing strategic frameworks and future investment which support this work.

1998	The first "Child Safe Church" branded manual was published by the Youth and Children's Ministry Unit (YACMU) within the Queensland Synod, accompanied by a training package that was presented in 3 parts over 3 years.
2000	The manual was revised, and in 2006 it was re-written with a new training program also introduced.
2006	Responsibility for Child Safe Church was transferred from YACMU to the Department of Finance and Property Services (FAPS)
2008	Queensland Synod's Child Safe Church Policy and Procedures was reviewed, and the ChildSafe™ system (which provided resources such as practical written guide books and access to online records management, forms, and information and training programs) was introduced.
2006-2010	FAPS employed a series Child Safe Church Officers in a part time capacity over this period.
mid-2010	The Queensland Synod Child Safe Church Officer was not replaced due to an apparent lack of demand for their services.
2010	Currency of information relating to child safety, provision of training and advisory services to Presbyteries and congregations was maintained by the Queensland Synod's Risk & Insurance Manager, in addition to other aspects of their more substantive role.
2014	Synod Standing Committee appointed a full time Child Safe Church Administrator with a view to being able to develop capacity and demonstrate compliance with Child Safe Church, statutory obligations and community expectations.
2016	Focus changed from Child Safe Church to Safe Ministry with Children – new materials available in March 2016 and launched at Synod in Session
2016	September - Safe Ministry (children) Administrator changes to part time
2017	July – Safe Ministry with Children transitions to sustainable model

Table 1: Brief History of the Queensland Synod's support for safe ministry with children – 1998 - 2017





## OUTCOMES

### THE SAFE MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN MODEL - CHANGING THE FOCUS FROM 'COMPLIANCE' TO 'CALL'

The Safe Ministry with Children model (Diagram 1) acts to enhance the culture of the church, so that we are better equipped to deliberately conduct ministry safely. The Safe Ministry with Children Policy, Processes and Tools support congregations to fulfil their vision for children's ministry in a way that meets the legislated standards, and is the result of a major shift in focus in response to evidence gathered from reviews of literature and current practice. The development of this bespoke model for conducting activities with children in the Queensland Synod has resulted from researching the evidence of 'what works', and listening to 'what will work here'. Though this a shift in focus from compliance to call, the intent is to reengage and ultimately increase compliance by demystifying the requirements of the legislation, and providing clear policies, process and tools. The key priority areas within this model include Awareness; Robust systems; Record keeping; Capacity development and Cycle of review.

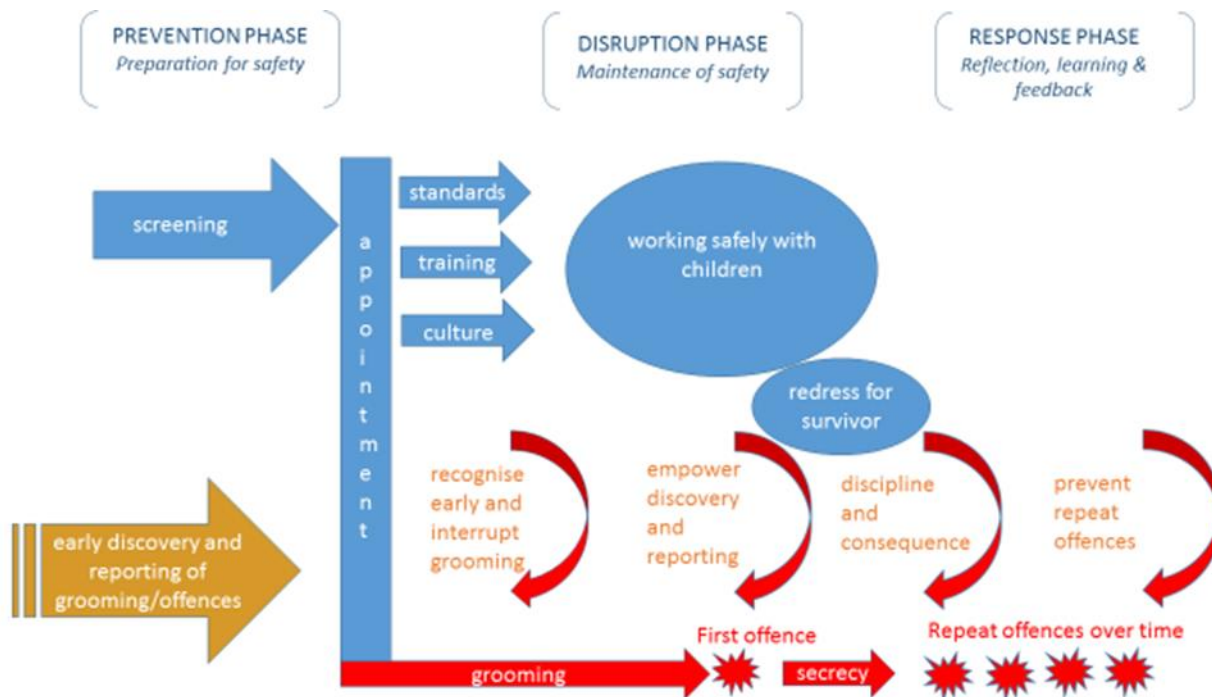


Diagram 1: Safe Ministry with Children model.

# FINAL REPORT



A multi-strategic, public health approach was utilised to engage with stakeholders, assess the suitability of the current approach, and determine future action. Consultation and collaboration are seen as one of the major success factors to the ongoing transition to a sustainable model. The establishment of the Safe Ministry with Children Reference group provided the Administrator with a conduit for advice, consultation and reference through the process of change. Meeting every second month, the group comprised Presbytery Chairs, Presbytery Ministers, key Presbytery staff, supporting safe ministry, and key Synod staff. Members were seen as the change facilitators, who were in a position to inform, shape and support the future of the work. Members were highly collaborative, responsive and informative throughout the duration of this body of work.

Through initial [consultation](#) with congregations, it became evident that the previous approach (Child Safe Church), though well informed, was not engaging congregations. The [2015 audit](#) requested by the Synod Standing Committee, precipitated the move from the ChildSafe™ system to Safe Ministry with Children. The [2016 audit](#) consolidated the shift and through a cycle of gathering and responding to feedback from congregations and Presbyteries, the Safe Ministry with Children suite of tools, was developed and launched in March 2016. The Safe Ministry with Children approach clearly supports and is linked to the strategic priorities set by the 32nd Synod: Christ centred, discipleship, leadership development, community connection and youth, children and families. The new resources would be reviewed annually to ensure an appropriate fit, and compliance with legislative requirements, developments from the Royal Commission and the Uniting Church Assembly. The qualitative information gathered through the consultation process is summarised below:

- The shift to Safe Ministry with children has provided us with an opportunity to visualise how our ministries with children, young people and families may be shaped to be strong and vibrant
- The shift away from a compliance focus to a more Christ centred focus is essential to reigniting passion for safe ministry with children
- Compliance is dependent on capacity development and leadership development
- In the absence of consistent leadership and support, engagement and congregations become discouraged and compliance is diminished
- We need to keep Ministers, Church Council Members and Presbytery support personnel supported and well informed, so that as they are approached for support and guidance, their responses are appropriate and consistent

The transition is seen in the progression from the state in 2014 where congregations felt that the focus was on compliance, which corresponded to low compliance; to the current state where the focus is on calling (Diagram 2). That is not to say that we have achieved the desired end state, but we have embarked on an approach to achieve it.

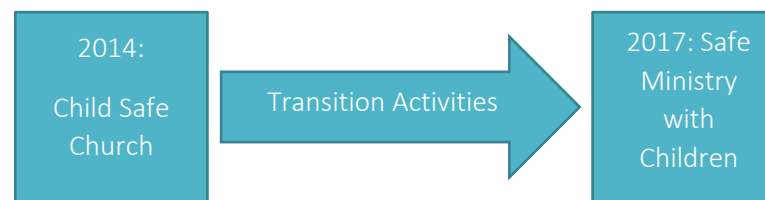


Diagram 2: Progress over time, an Enterprise Architecture depiction

# FINAL REPORT



## BENEFITS REVIEW

The quest is to gain an improvement in compliance as a result of increased engagement and shift in focus, and so far, qualitative feedback reflects a positive response from congregations and Presbyteries. A survey of the key stakeholders was conducted, to elicit views about the benefits of the current work, and visions for future investment. A set of five questions were asked, the first two in relation to the benefits:

1. In your opinion, what have been the most significant changes in relation to this work?
  - Everything is a lot clearer, and easier to adopt. The process towards compliance is clear for church councils, ministers etc
  - A network of communication and support has been established through the Reference Group, and ongoing collaboration between the Presbyteries and Synod stakeholders,
  - The development of a customised and comprehensive model for Safe Ministry with Children, which is congruent with the values, Regulations and processes of the church, meets Legislative obligations and the benchmarks of the Royal Commission's recommendations,
  - Negotiation and establishment of a sustainable process for recording and processing blue card registrations for stipend recipients,
  - Role definitions and interactions between Presbyteries and Synod in relation to safe ministry with children have been strengthened, and
  - A cycle of continuous improvement has been undertaken, whereby annual audits against the requirements of the Regulatory Body, the Assembly and the Royal Commission have been completed
  - Our ministry is growing
  - People are very pleased to know what to do in case of an incident
  - People are more likely to report now as a result of this training
  - We recognise grooming more a result of this work
  - Overall getting the processes for steps for reporting and raising awareness of being safe in ministry with children
  - A competent person to lead this important journey
  - The creation of the Reference Group where there is opportunity to explore legal requirements and how that will actually look on the ground and if it is workable.
  - The annual reporting has helped congregations to be accountable and know what they need to do.
  - For Calvary Presbytery, the Synod has offered us a framework, a set of policies and useful resources that now makes it clear to us the responsibilities that we have in the area of Safe Ministry with Children. This was not in place for us two years ago. We have had one successful training day as a Presbytery using the resources which you have given us. We have adapted these where necessary, but they have been very good to have.
  - Streamlining and making sure most people are on the same page.

# FINAL REPORT



- B.C.A.L.M.R.E.S.P.O.N.D and the toolkit for ministry agents
2. What challenges to safe ministry with children do you feel have been overcome during this work?
- In the past it was "too difficult" and was ignored by some
  - We've started breaking down silos – now working in a more partnered way and having more access to information, and less complicated processes
  - Safe media requirements
  - Individuals understanding the importance of safety for all people involved in ministry – Network of Shared Guardianship.
  - Seeing the light bulb come on when the relation to the paper/legal and the safety of children.
  - We have been able to implement the policies and procedures in a number of ways, but we still have a way to go. The granting of Blue Cards has been done in nearly all of the areas required. But some of the other paperwork is too onerous and not able to be understood in the places where English is a second language. It will take time to get more appropriate resources together. In addition, some church premises are not up to safety standards, but we are gradually up-grading, the main limits being a lack of capital development funds to do the necessary work.
  - It's hard to know if you've achieved the desired goals with so many people involved, but we've tried to make sure that resources are simplified for people at every level

## PRODUCTS

The development of the customised model included the review of published literature about why people offend in institutional settings, including publications from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The review of literature, along with the Appreciative Inquiry survey of congregations' attitudes to ministry with children, and annual audits informed the development of, and quality improvements to the Safe Ministry with Children policy, processes and tools.

TRAINING: In the February 2016 Reference Group decided to focus on ensuring that by the end of 2016, all individuals influencing, informing and/or conducting activities with children, (congregations, ministers, presbyteries and synod support staff) understand and use Safe Ministry with Children resources to do so. In the move away from Child Safe Church to Safe Ministry with Children, access to online training has been lost. Since the transition, a range training modules have been produced, Presbyteries have developed training strategies which fit the nature of their demographic, and have supported facilitators to deliver face to face [training sessions](#). There are plans to provide a mixed model of training so that there is increased choice and access, thus Safe Ministry with Children training modules will ultimately be available via the Synod's Online Training Platform, with interim measures to address this shortfall in the meantime. There are plans to strengthen the network of training facilitators as part of this mixed model approach. Since its inception Presbyteries have conducted 116 face to face training sessions for congregations, to 2,104 participants from 835 congregations. They have also conducted workshops for facilitators and church council members, culturally appropriate training, blue card awareness workshops.

# FINAL REPORT



#	Product name	Description	Comment
1	<a href="#">Literature review</a>	To investigate the nature of offending behaviour in institutional settings	One-off document used to inform the development of resources
2	<a href="#">Safe Ministry with Children (SMC) Policy</a>	Overarching document – scope includes congregations, ministry agents and activities conducted by Presbyteries and Synod, for children	This, along with the Processes and tools, is the church’s ‘Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy’ required under legislation, and reviewed annually in line with dictates of the Act
3	<a href="#">SMC Processes and tools</a>	Suite of supportive resources to support implementation of the policy	<a href="#">Reviewed annually</a> in line with dictates of the Act. See Appendix 1 for more detailed information about the <a href="#">current work</a> .
4	<a href="#">SMC Website</a>	One-stop-shop with links to SMC information, processes and documents	Reviewed and updated each time there is a change in information
5	<a href="#">Report abuse</a>	Online facility for reporting abuse, supported by 1800 telephone response	Reviewed and updated each time there is a change in process
6	<a href="#">SMC Training modules and supportive tools</a>	Suite of training resources under ongoing development as part of the capacity development strategy	This work is ongoing and as yet incomplete.
7	Information bulletins	Periodic information sharing via Uniting News and direct email updates as part of the communication strategy	This is ongoing
8	<a href="#">Annual Compliance Summary</a>	Summary of annual audit results. Is inclusive of congregations, Presbyteries, Synod, schools and agencies	This comprehensive ‘whole of synod’ review is broader than the scope of SMC. It enables issues to be identified and addressed, and informs the Property Trust of progress and compliance levels
9	<a href="#">Annual Policy Review</a>	Assessment of SMC policy, processes and tools against the Assembly’s Framework, Royal Commission’s Elements of Child Safe Organisations, and State Government’s self-assessment checklist for compliance with the Act.	This comprehensive review highlights areas of achievement, and areas for future development.

Table 2: Products



## FOLLOW-ON ACTIONS

### TOWARD SUSTAINABILITY- SAFE AND STRONG YOUTH MINISTRY

Beyond the abovementioned outcomes, benefits and products, a number of additional 'significant changes' have been identified for ongoing attention and continuous improvement. Continuous improvement is more than an ideal to which we aspire, it is a requirement of the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act, 2000. Using evidence upon which to base our improvements, we must continually transition from what was, to what needs to be (Diagram 3).



Diagram 3: Toward sustainability, an Enterprise Architecture depiction

This progression has been informed by the results of audits, recommendations and reports emanating from the Royal Commission, Legislative requirements, and academic literature. While it could be said that this work is in a constant state of transition, the evidence gathered over the past three years can inform the future strategic investments in safe ministry. From the stakeholder survey the following responses were gathered in relation to the future of this work:

#### 1. What challenges still exist?

- Keeping the momentum going, updating as necessary, keeping up with changes- especially with govt/legal requirements
- Some people still challenge and question things, for example the requirement of blue cards. But we're in a climate of increased awareness and increased questions – it's very good, we're more equipped to answer those questions.
- Communication within and between presbyteries – not just the people in key positions, but the people down the line.
- Still getting people to do Safe Ministry with children training.
- We still need to do more to engage with, resource and support the multicultural parts of the church
- The scope of this policy is congregation's presbytery and synod. Legislation applies to all entities, therefore Synod should continue to monitor what's going on in the other spaces where we interact with children
- We need to be able to say with confidence that our children's' ministries are vibrant safe and strong
- Maintaining the ongoing training – we don't become complacent

# FINAL REPORT



- Ministry agents understanding the reporting of harm/disclosures
- I am not convinced we have moved from compliance to call.
- We still have a way to go in training people how to deal with incidents and issues.
- Specific training is needed for ministers and Presbytery officers.
- Though we are on the journey we have not yet broken the back of cultural change so we still need someone dedicated in the Synod space to facilitate this.
- The Safe Ministry with Children is a part of Safe Ministry per se and we need to broaden that frame to assist the reframing as mission and call rather than compliance.
- There is always an ebb and flow in children's/youth ministry leadership in Aboriginal communities. Keeping up-to-date with this is sometimes difficult. We have been hindered to some extent by not having ministers or qualified pastors in some of our congregations who can provide the necessary day-to-day oversight and encouragement.
- For a rural Presbytery with diminishing numbers of people, it is difficult for people involved in leadership and in children's ministry to focus on a broader view than the work in their own congregations. It is difficult to develop and sustain people's commitment to a Presbytery wide network.
- There is still reluctance to engage with the philosophy/requirements of training, particularly those on Church Councils but this is changing. Some congregations struggle to find someone locally who can conduct the training
- Ongoing support for witnesses and interactions and persons of concern and the informant – pastorally and within the congregation
- Managing situations when cases are in limbo for a duration of months or years
- Transitions of ministers, ensuring information is passed on to new ministry agents regarding persons of concern.
- Accessing information about persons of concern via a central register in Synod
- Knowing how the church know the result of an allegation regarding an investigations so that a person under investigation can resume or not, how does that information get shared.
- Making sure people in congregations see the seriousness of this and don't keep going back into the old resistant ways.
- I think the Blue Card processes still need some work, raising awareness for people in congregations who are generally unaware of the logistical requirements; retired Ministers who may see themselves as volunteers; stipended persons thinking that replacement cards will be issued quickly; stipended persons still not realising that Synod must sign off the applications.
- There should be more trained facilitators of the training. This I think is a must and needs to be given priority. Personally I am not convinced about On Line learning for this sort of thing and prefer to be hands on.

# FINAL REPORT



2. What is your vision for sustainable safe ministry with children?
  - Support for improved communication within and between presbyteries
  - I'd still like a process to be in place where we can ask questions and keep updating if things change.
  - Online training - at every training I do someone asks about online, but there is also others who say that the discussion is so important
  - Safe Ministry with Children could support and dovetail with the establishment of intentional church communities
  - To maintain the employment of an Administrator who has the passion for safe ministry
  - In often troubled and conflicted Indigenous communities, the church is the one place which can be a place of safety and reconciliation. This is our vision and commitment.
  - In our Presbytery, we would value:
    - A full time Synod appointment that facilitates a state-wide network to support the ongoing development and review of SMC and who is available for advice, support and, when appropriate, training.
    - The same flow of information from Synod on changes and updates in SMC - the communication methods do need to include provision for the small number of congregational leaders who do not have facility with digital communications.
    - A Synod commitment to staffing the SMC role for the next 5 years.
  - A system of constant reflection, annual review, training for all parties including ministry agents, church councils, leaders and helpers
  - Clear guidelines that are simple to follow
  - Remain strong in the stated shift from Compliance to Calling;
  - Work to maintain the strong link to the priorities of the Synod – not sure how easy it will be to maintain this in the years ahead but alignment with the general direction of the Church seems useful and productive to me.
  
3. What else would you like to say?
  - I find the network useful but limited to who can come,
  - It would be good to be broader engagement with training facilitators and people doing the implementing
  - As our awareness, knowledge and skills grow, and potential offenders realise this, they'll be less likely to gain access to children, children will be safer.
  - We've come a long way – if we get it all right we'll encourage (people/ children) back into churches.
  - Lynette's role is so important. We need someone who is working with us as Presbytery people, to be a reference, to continue to update and upgrade training, and to maintain a quality of training to our children's ministry leaders and helpers.
  - We have focused on "Safe Ministry with Children" – let's explore the wider "Safe Ministry" generic - of which children are part



# FINAL REPORT



- Don't apologise for compliance it is necessary
- Thanks for your help and wisdom.
- Thanks for all the work you have done and continue to do.
- Thank you Lynette, I hope you keep your job.
- Affirm Lynette's role in being able to get to this point so quickly. Without her devotion and commitment to this, visiting, encouraging, informing, it could easily have just been set aside to do "sometime"
- My only addition is to reiterate the importance of Lynette having been the person in that role. I don't think others would have had the same passion and drive and ability as her.
  - The work you have done has been vital, and it needs to continue if we're going to have safe places for people to connect.
  - Thanks for all you have done and continue to do.

In her [opening address](#) to the Building Resilience conference 2015, Elizabeth hall articulated the following blockages to culture change which warrant consideration as we proceed:

- Belief that abuse doesn't happen in church
- Desire to keep this within the church
- Not wanting to hear / embarrassment
- Person / family is well-known and respected
- Confusing confidentiality with secrecy
- Difficulty understanding abuse in adolescence
- Slow to develop policies, training, infrastructure
- Belief that church is about forgiveness not condemnation
- Issues surrounding false allegations
- Issues surrounding adult abuse when person isn't deemed vulnerable
- Difficulty keeping up with new legislation, trends and patterns of abuse e.g. social media
- Interface with secular organisations such as government agencies, and then their response confirms these fears

# FINAL REPORT



The ongoing strategic intent of Safe Ministry with Children is twofold, and made explicit in the goals, (Table 3), bodies of work, both routine (program) as well as time limited (project) which fit within the outlined objectives: Awareness, Robust systems, Record keeping, Capacity development, and Cycle of review. It is important that the feedback from the stakeholder survey be incorporated into the planning activities for the future of this work.

Goals:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To ensure that in our ministry and mission with children we are strongly aware of our responsibilities with respect to safe ministry and mission with children.</li> <li>2. To provide and resource robust systems which support a culture in which children can safely experience the love of God for them.</li> </ol>
Drivers: Internal and External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assembly expectation that Synods oversee the fulfilment of our mission sharing the kingdom of God with the world.</li> <li>• Presbytery and congregation expectation that Synod provides resource and training to enable safe ministry.</li> <li>• Ministers' expectation that the Synod will provide a cohesive framework (policy, process and tools) within which to conduct ministry.</li> <li>• Agency and school expectation that Synod provides a coherent policy framework.</li> <li>• Community expectations built out of the experience of the Royal Commission.</li> <li>• Government expectations – funding bodies, legal frameworks, including but not limited to the <i>Working With Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000</i> (Qld) (the Act) and the <i>Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011</i> (Qld)(The Regulation).</li> </ul>
Objectives:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Awareness:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Continuation of the established informative communication strategies, and ongoing collaborative networks. This includes the Safe Ministry with Children Reference group meetings, information bulletins, and collaboration processes which support the review cycle.</li> </ol> </li> <li><b>2. Robust systems:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The continued annual review of Safe Ministry with Children, necessary to meet legislative requirements.</li> <li>b. Ongoing work toward harmonisation with the Regulations and processes of the church, Legislative obligations and the benchmarks of the Royal Commission's recommendations.</li> <li>c. Continuous improvement of the system including the development of resources to address areas of deficit identified in the annual review, respond to recommendations of the Royal Commission and adhere to frameworks introduced by the Assembly / National Task Group.</li> </ol> </li> <li><b>3. Record keeping:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Records of training, blue cards, allegations and offences. This body of work requires ongoing research and support so that sustainable processes and tools are available and utilised.</li> </ol> </li> <li><b>4. Capacity development</b></li> </ol>

# FINAL REPORT



- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Continued engagement, both proactive and responsive, to support key personnel in Presbyteries and Synod.</li> <li>b. Mechanisms to achieve knowledge transfer and develop capacity for succession planning.</li> <li>c. Ongoing development and roll out of the SMC training strategy, including             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Reviewing existing training modules and developing additional modules</li> <li>ii. Supporting the network of face to face facilitators</li> <li>iii. Utilising an interim online learning platform to ensure better access to learning until such time as a transition to the Synod's Learning Management System is undertaken.</li> </ul> </li> <li>d. Expanded engagement with other Synods to enhance learning and sharing of resources, toward the shared goal of harmonisation.</li> </ul> <p><b>5. Cycle of review</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A continuation of the annual audit cycle to monitor compliance with legislative and church frameworks for all entities within the Synod (including Agencies and Schools).</li> <li>b. Streamlining audit processes with the Assembly audits in order to minimise approaches to entities for audit purposes.</li> <li>c. Measures to ensure that the review process is inclusive of allegations and offences have been recommended by the Royal Commission and should be taken into consideration.</li> </ul> |
|--|--|



<b>Measures:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communication plan annually reviewed and implemented (as required under the Act)</li> <li>2. Annual review of policies, processes and tools (as required under the Act) against benchmark standards</li> <li>3. A suite of training modules is available via online and face to face delivery; A network of training facilitators is established and supported; Presbyteries are supported to select and train their facilitators</li> <li>4. Regular compliance reviews with entities/stakeholders (as recommended by the Royal Commission) – Every 2 years, on a rotational basis.</li> </ol>
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Table 3: Current State 2017

## LESSONS LEARNT

As we transition to the next phase of this current work, the feedback gathered through the survey and audit process to date is noteworthy. This review process has acted as a monitoring mechanism and provides an ongoing report card which tells the story of our progress in developing a culture of care. The 2014 survey used an Appreciative Enquiry approach, to provide a snapshot of challenges and strengths for congregations conducting child and youth ministry within the Synod at that time. From the strengths identified in the 2014 Survey, the following aspirational elements (strengths) are built into the Safe Ministry with Children model. Safe Ministry with Children:

- Provides overarching structure, process, uniformity and safeguards
- Enables congregation's strong commitment to ministry with children, youth and families, to be expressed as a part of their Mission Plan, and supported by both Presbytery and Synod
- Encourages intentional team planning for regular programs as well as special events
- Facilitates appropriate, well trained, prepared, leaders who are actively valued and supported
- Utilises a process to consider gifting when identifying potential leaders and giving them roles and responsibilities.
- Enables interesting and engaging activities and events to be provided as part of ministry with children
- Empowers positive relationship building, both interpersonal and spiritual
- Ensures children are valued, in a positive environment of tolerance, love, involvement and acceptance
- Encourages a focus on all ages and abilities, with children as a legitimate and contributing part of the whole
- Enables the congregation to involve children, parents and family members in all aspects of ministry with children and young people, and encourages their participation to the level with which they feel comfortable

This body of work identified the following challenges, which Safe Ministry strategies have started to address, act as a reminder of what we may see in future if congregations again become disenfranchised:

- Congregations may struggle to demonstrate compliance with legislative requirements

# FINAL REPORT



- Access to information may not always be easy
- There may be confusion about the requirements of legislation, policy and procedure
- Resourcing and consistence may be difficult for many

Further investigation in the 2015 audit reinforced that congregations had become disenfranchised with Child Safe Church, with only a handful able to demonstrate compliance with the stated mandatory requirements. This body of work highlighted:

- The addition of a hierarchical structure (Child Safe Church) was not congruent with how things are done in the Church,
- The absence of ongoing consistent support for capacity development (from 1998 to 2014) was a contributing factor to the low levels of compliance,
- In order to re-engage congregations and increase demonstrable compliance, the redesign of the resources needed to reflect the feedback from congregations and meet their needs, this would work best if accompanied by a capacity development approach.

We are now seeing a model based on relationship, supportive of the way decisions are made within our church, and centred on the congregations call and mission. The model has monitoring and evaluation functions, and is responsive to changes in the evidence base and regulatory requirements. There is need for further investment in the development of capacity and networks which support knowledge transfer and sustainability.

## PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

For the remainder of 2017 the focus will be on consolidating the strategy with a view to making recommendations for sustainable implementation into the future. The Safe Ministry with Children Reference Group will consider what Safe Ministry with Children looks like in 2018 and beyond and how the follow-on actions will achieve this. Interim actions will include:

- Ensuring alignment with the Strategic Priorities of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Synod in Session
- Operational alignment within the changing structure of the Synod Office,
- Continuing the capacity development and training strategies,
- Continuing the cycle of review which is mandated by legislation,
- Addressing the deficits revealed in the 2016 review, (e.g. increasing awareness amongst non-English speaking/English as a second language congregations) and
- Defining the future vision, milestones and goal posts

As a matter of course, all of the actions and recommendations associated with this body of work will be supported by strategic documents which provide rigour to the work being undertaken and planned.

# FINAL REPORT



## Document Review History

Version Number	Date	Reason	Author	Consulted	Approved
1	03.06.2017	Completion report, Transition areas identified	Safe Ministry (children) Administrator	Presbytery (Safe Ministry) reference group Presbytery Ministers' Nominee – Royal Commission Task Group Risk & Insurance manager Acting Team Leader – Legal and Governance Human Resources manager Business Change and Transition Manager	General Secretary



# Summary Church Life Profile

## Uniting Church QLD

### A summary report about the vitality of local churches who took part in the 2016 National Church Life Survey

This report provides a summary of results about the people of the churches in this region, what they value and prioritise, their gifts and skills, how they relate to God, each other, and the wider community, as well as vision, innovation and leadership culture.

The survey results are based on 6,320 adult attenders aged 15 years and over in 113 churches, and 349 children aged 8 to 14 years, who completed the 2016 National Church Life Survey.

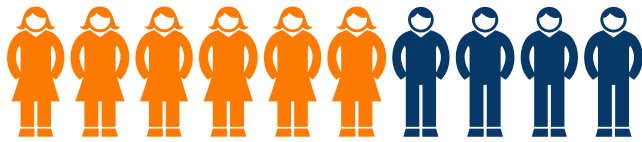
Note: The Child Survey was optional, so not all participating churches with children may have ordered/returned forms.

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# The People of This Church



## DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE



63% of all people are female and 37% are male

35% of all people have a university degree



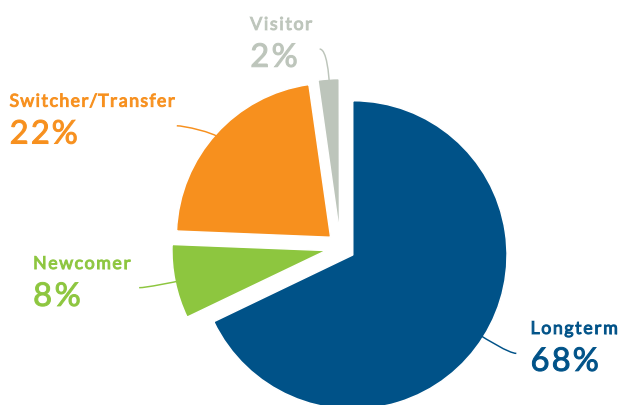
25% have a trade certificate, diploma or associate diploma



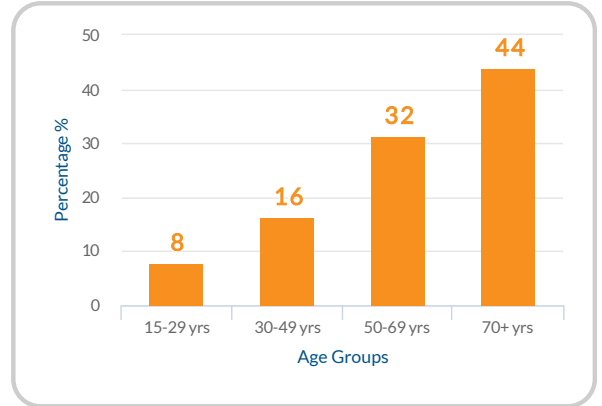
39% have primary or secondary school education



## CHURCH BACKGROUND and ATTENDANCE



The AVERAGE AGE of people is 62 years



76% of all people were born in AUSTRALIA

24% were born overseas

11% speak a language other than ENGLISH at home



31% of attenders are new arrivals to their church in the past five years.

96% attend church worship services at least monthly



You in 2016 - Uniting Church QLD (UA300000, 6320 forms, 349 child forms, 113 churches)

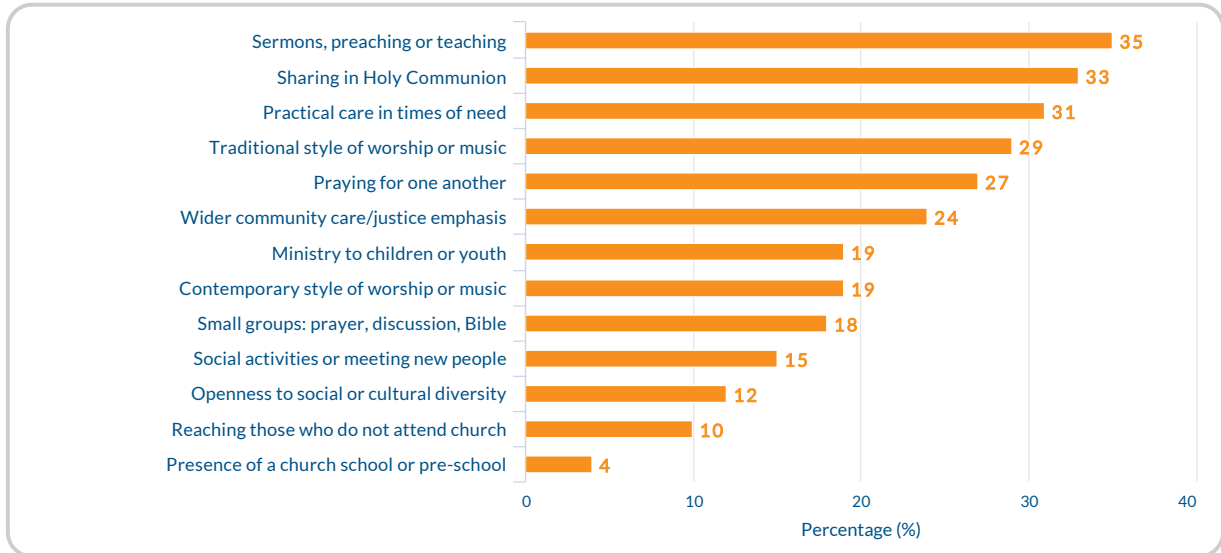


# What People Value and Prioritise



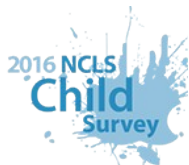
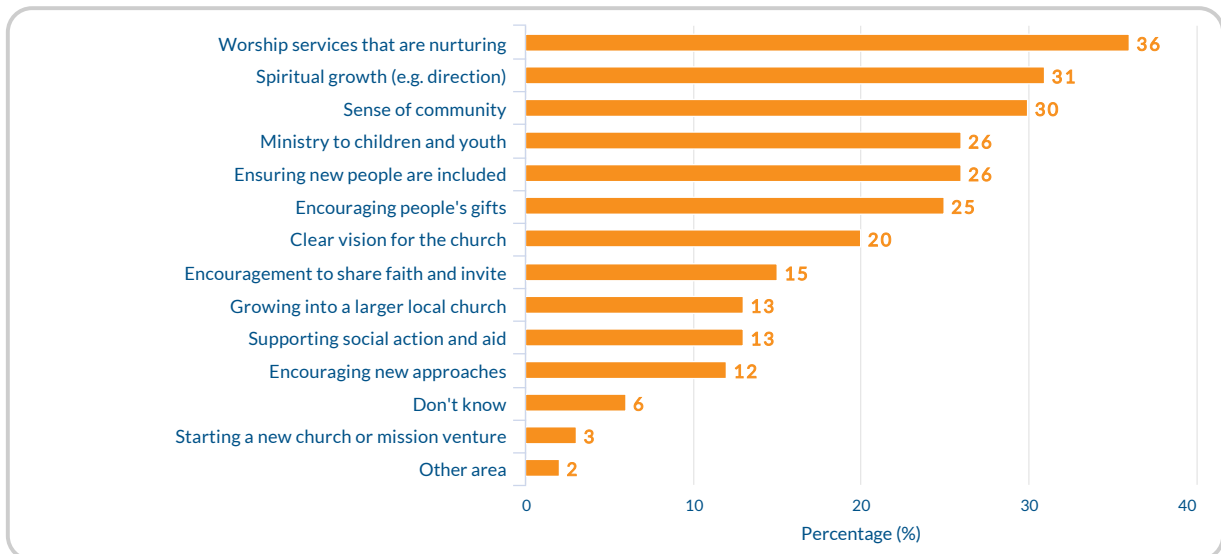
## WHAT PEOPLE VALUE ABOUT THEIR CHURCH

Attendees most value 'Sermons, preaching or Bible teaching' and 'Sharing in Holy Communion/the Eucharist/Lord's Supper'



## FUTURE PRIORITIES

Over the next 12 months most attendees would like priority given to: 'Worship services that are nurturing' and 'Spiritual growth (e.g. direction)'.



## CHILDREN'S VIEWS ABOUT GROUPS

When asked about groups for children and youth, the children most like:

- Playing games **91%**
- Being with people my own age **81%**

You in 2016 - Uniting Church QLD (UA300000, 6320 forms, 349 child forms, 113 churches)

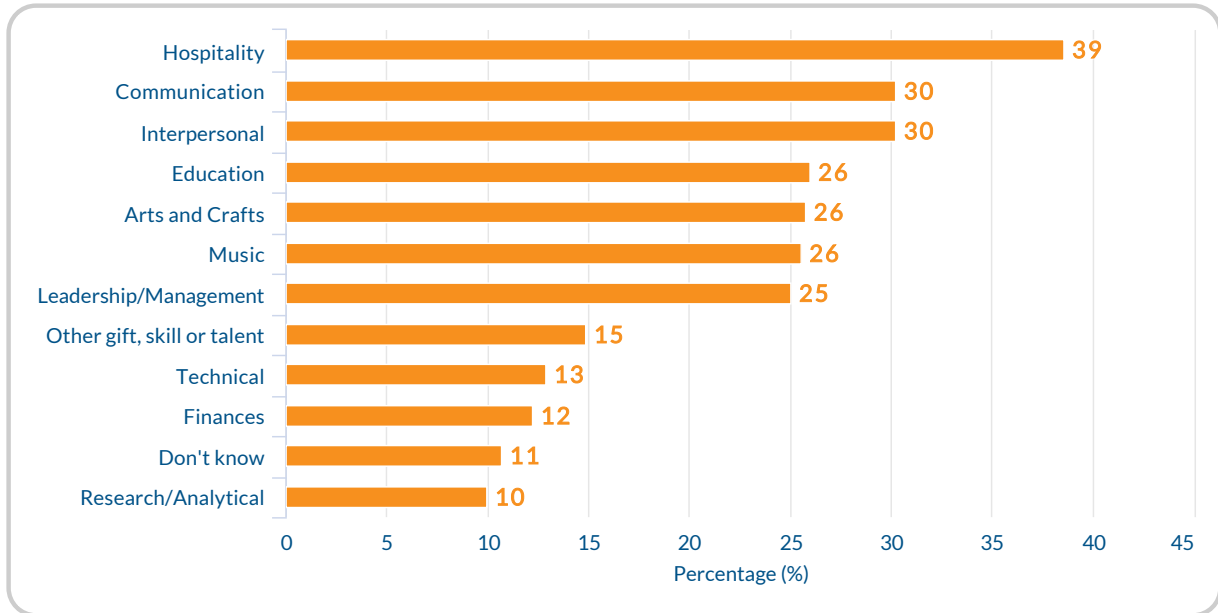


# People's Gifts and Skills

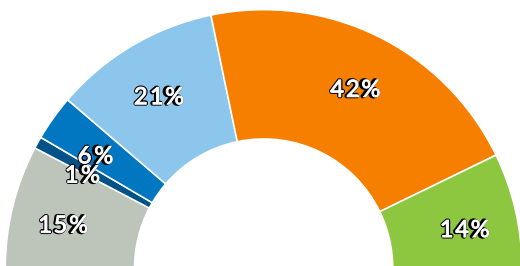


## USE OF GIFTS and SKILLS

Attendees most commonly identified their gifts or skills as "Hospitality: welcome, host, provide food" and "Communication: write, edit, speak"

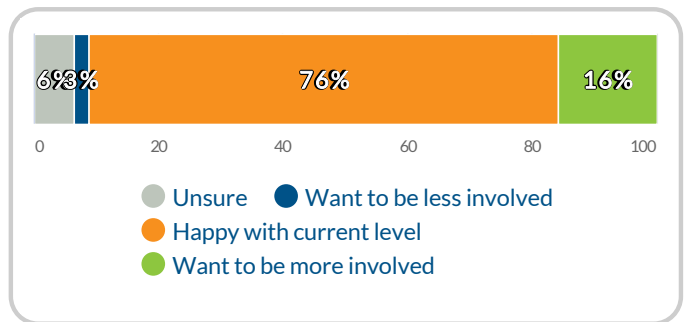


**57%** of attendees agree that their GIFTS, SKILLS AND TALENTS ARE BEING USED WELL at their local church

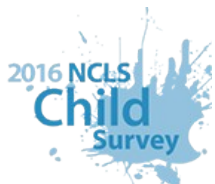


● Don't Know   
 ● Strongly Disagree   
 ● Disagree  
● Neutral/Unsure   
 ● Agree   
 ● Strongly Agree

**16%** want to be MORE INVOLVED at their local church



● Unsure   
 ● Want to be less involved  
● Happy with current level  
● Want to be more involved



## GIFTS & SKILLS OF CHILDREN

Children most commonly identified "Being kind to people who don't have any friends yet" and "Having lots of new and different ideas" as their gifts and skills.

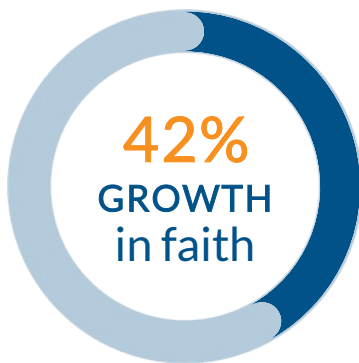
You in 2016 - Uniting Church QLD (UA300000, 6320 forms, 349 child forms, 113 churches)

# How People Relate to God

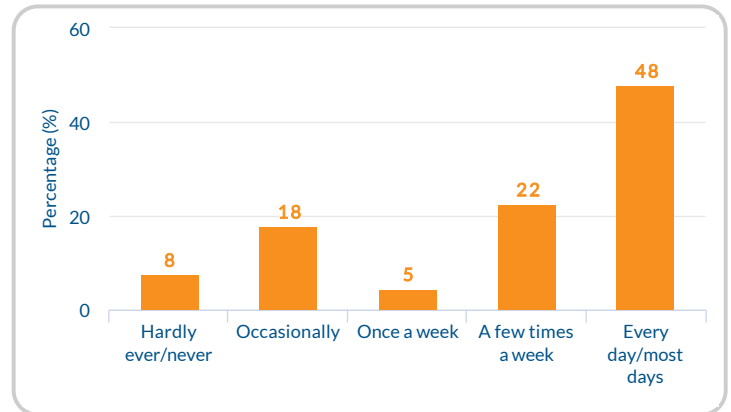


## PERSONAL FAITH

**42%** of attenders said that they had experienced much **GROWTH IN FAITH** in the previous 12 months



**48%** spend time in **PRAYER, BIBLE READING, MEDITATION** everyday or most days



### IMPORTANCE of GOD in people's lives:

"God is more important to me than almost anything else" **35%**

"God is the most important reality in my life" **48%**



## CHURCH WORSHIP SERVICES

During church worship services, attenders always or usually experience:

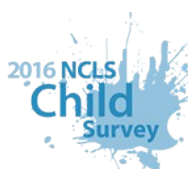
**MUSIC**  
they appreciate



**GROWTH**  
in understanding of God



Being challenged to  
**TAKE ACTION**



## CHILDREN'S VIEWS OF GOD

Children agreed:

God helps me to lead a better life **84%**

I know that Jesus is very close to me **79%**

# How People Relate to Each Other



## BELONGING and INVOLVEMENT



**90%** of people have a strong sense of belonging to their local church

**87%** found it easy to make friends within their local church



Small prayer, discussion or Bible study groups

35



Fellowships, clubs, social or other groups

49



Evangelistic or outreach activities

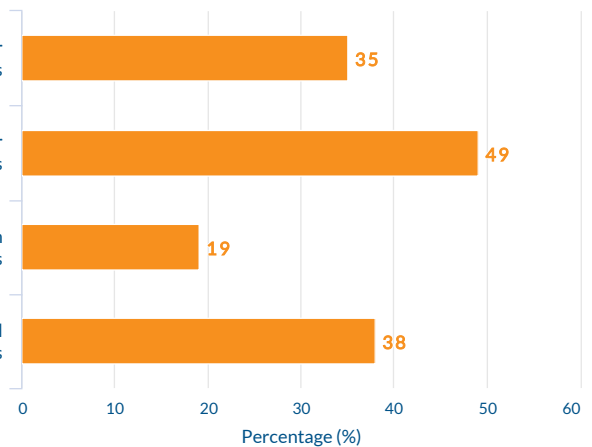
19



Community service, social justice or welfare activities

38

People in local churches are involved in various local church groups



## SATISFACTION with LOCAL CHURCH ACTIVITIES

People shared how satisfied they are with what is offered by their local church:

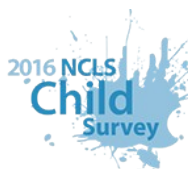
For their own age **80%**

For children aged under 12 years **66%**

For youth aged 12 to 18 years **49%**



**SATISFIED**

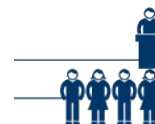


## CHILDREN'S RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS

Children feel close to:

Leaders at their local church **50%**

Other children at their local church **57%**



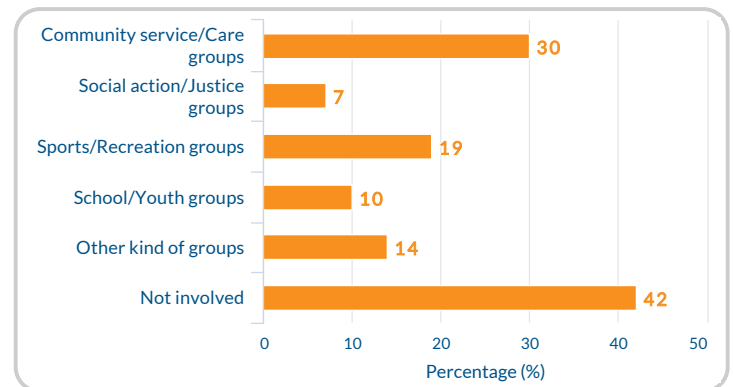
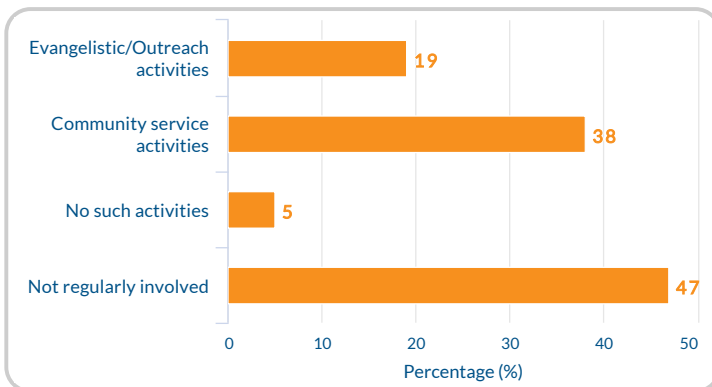
# How People Relate to the Wider Community



## INVOLVEMENT IN GROUPS

49% of people reach out to the wider community through activities of their local churches

58% of people participate in wider community groups



Note: Attenders could choose more than one option, so percentages will not add to 100%



## WORDS and ACTIONS

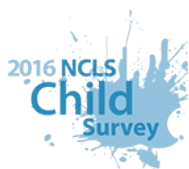
13% feel at ease TALKING ABOUT FAITH with others and look for opportunities to do so

34% INVITED friends and relatives to a church service in this last year



Attenders have made OFFERS OF HELP to others in a range of informal ways →

Informal action in last 12 months	%
Donated money to a charitable organisation	78
Visited someone in hospital	53
Lent or gave money to someone outside your family	47
Helped someone through a personal crisis (not sickness)	43
Given some of your possessions to someone in need	41
Cared for someone who was very sick	30
Contacted a parliamentarian/councillor on a public issue	17
Tried to stop someone abusing alcohol or drugs	11



## CHILDREN'S ACTS OF SERVICE & JUSTICE

Children often:

- Talk to their school friends about God **10%**
- Help raise money for poor people **14%**
- Do things to help the environment **35%**

You in 2016 - Uniting Church QLD (UA300000, 6320 forms, 349 child forms, 113 churches)

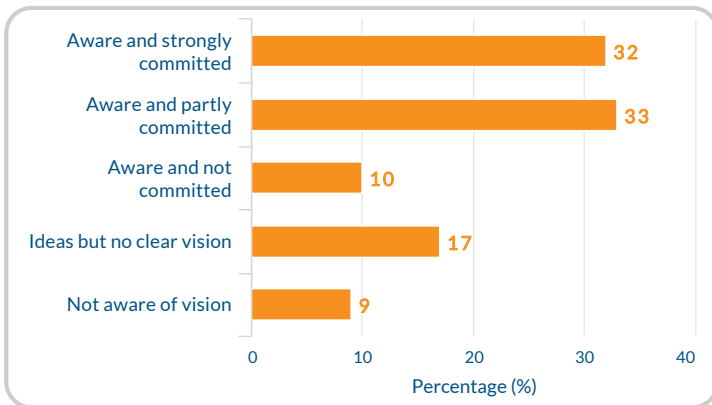


# Vision, Innovation and Leadership Culture

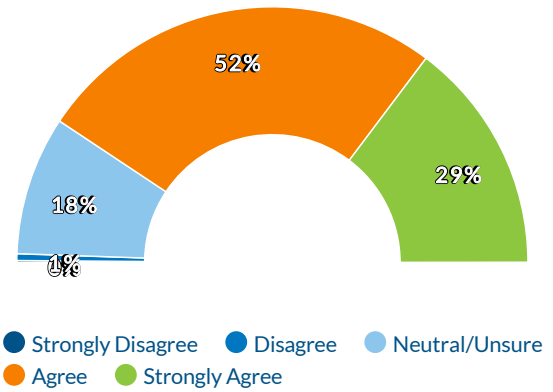


## VISION and INNOVATION

**32%** of people are both aware of and strongly COMMITTED TO THE VISION and goals or directions for their local church

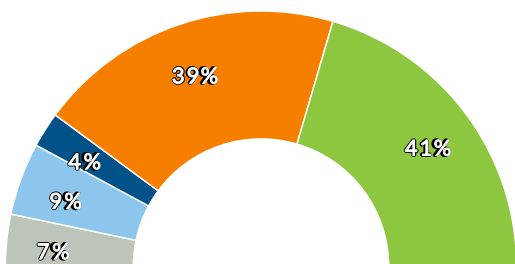


**81%** agree that they would SUPPORT the development of new initiatives in the ministry and mission of their local church



## LEADERSHIP CULTURE

**41%** are fully confident that their local church CAN ACHIEVE THE VISION, goals or directions set



Legend: Vision Not Clear (Grey), Don't Know (Light Blue), Not Confident (Dark Blue), Partly Confident (Orange), Fully Confident (Green)

**73%** agree that their local church is always ready to TRY SOMETHING NEW

**51%** of attenders perform a LEADERSHIP OR MINISTRY ROLE

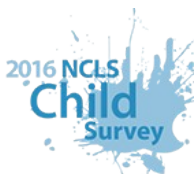
**78%** agree that their local church has good and CLEAR SYSTEMS for how it operates

Attenders agree:

**59%** Leaders encourage me to find and use my gifts and skills to a great or some extent

**78%** Leaders take into account ideas of people at church to a great or some extent

**69%** Leaders at church inspire me to action



## ROLE MODELS FOR CHILDREN

Adults at church (including leaders) are good examples of people who follow Jesus **96%**

Family members are good examples of people who follow Jesus **92%**

You in 2016 - Uniting Church QLD (UA300000, 6320 forms, 349 child forms, 113 churches)



# #realunitingchurch

## Report from **Finance and Property Services**

---

### Context

Until 10 July 2017, the Department of Finance and Property Services (FAPS) was a major service area within the Synod office. In July 2017 the Synod office was restructured. The services provided by FAPS continue to be provided within the new Synod office structure by different teams.

This is the final FAPS report to Synod in Session.

The By-laws specifying the responsibilities and functions of the Department of Finance and Property Services were abolished in July 2017 by decision of Synod Standing Committee.

Until July 2017, FAPS consisted of the following teams:

- Finance
- Property Resources
- Risk and Insurance
- Information Technology
- Raymont Residential College
- Alexandra Park Conference Centre.

# Report

## Finance

The purpose of Finance is to ensure the effective management of the financial resources for the Synod office and to support the Finance Investment and Property (FIP) Board in its contribution to the total mission of the Uniting Church.

The main responsibilities include:

- Financial accounting/compliance
- Financial analysis
- Treasury management/Uniting Church Investment Service (UCIS).

## Achievements

- Presbytery treasurers' forum held in November 2016 for the first time in three years. The majority of presbyteries attended and engaged in discussion across a broad range of financial matters.
- Commenced development of fraud awareness pack to assist congregations in their responsibilities around financial stewardship.
- Commenced rewrite of Treasurers' Manual following a survey of treasurers.
- The FIP Board approved a new Investment Policy which creates a structured and risk-monitored approach to give higher return options to long-term funds held by UCIS. The growth investment strategy adheres to the Synod Ethical Investment Policy.
- UCIS has continued the strategy of providing improved rates to all products. Interest rate settings have been continually reviewed to address the market competitiveness of the rates applied to investor funds, and decrease internal loan rates. All depositors have enjoyed increased rates across all funds held within UCIS. The rates are measured and benchmarked against our external financial services providers.
- The Synod office, UnitingCare and Wesley Mission Queensland combined to tender for external audit services. A common audit provider was selected to provide competitive market pricing and service provision to maintain the high standard of governance over audited financial statements.

## Property Resources

Main areas of service provision:

- Maintenance of Synod-wide property records
- Assistance to congregations, presbyteries and schools regarding all things property
- Land tax point of reference
- Evaluation of loan proposals.

## Achievements

- Progression of the development application for Alexandra Park Conference Centre through the Sunshine Coast Regional Council processes. A DA is expected to be issued later in 2017.



- Extraction of relevant data from discontinued Proclaim software and input into Sugar CRM property registers.
- Coordination of refurbishment work in the Synod office building.
- Conducted property utilisation survey.
- Assisted in the roll-out of new Synod office Delegations Framework and Matrix.
- Dealt with a number of unusual and complex property transactions on behalf of church bodies.

## Insurance

The Group Insurance team assists with and arranges general insurance to protect insurable property and liability exposures of The Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (Q.) and all of its entities.

Each Synod currently has its own autonomous commercial insurance arrangements. Such arrangements contain independent broker service contracts and separately negotiated insurance programs with differing renewal dates and levels of self-insured retentions. This is now being reviewed nationally (see below).

### Achievements

- Periodic insurance building valuations have been undertaken across the Queensland Synod. The currency of insurance building valuations is generally accepted to be a site visit every three to five years in conjunction with desktop reviews and the application of annual indexation where applicable.
- Synods of the Uniting Church in Australia are working together to consider the opportunities for the establishment of a consolidated national insurance program with a single broker appointment. The objective of this approach would be to build upon and review existing general insurance program placements and structures to ensure appropriate and comprehensive insurances are in place to mitigate insurable exposures in the most effective and efficient way, across the following broad general insurance types:
  - Property insurances, including but not limited to Industrial Special Risks and Motor Vehicle Fleet
  - Liability insurances, including but not limited to Professional Lines, and Directors and Officers liability
  - Personal accident and other related/relevant general insurance.

## Information Technology

The priority for the Information Technology team is the timely delivery of IT services to the Synod office and providing strategic information systems which enable the Synod office to support its revitalisation journey.

### Achievements

- Reduction of physical servers by migrating to a new server virtualisation platform.
- Migration of all mobile phones to new data usage plans, making a considerable cost saving whilst ensuring staff have the necessary data to perform their roles.

- Upgrade of the Wi-Fi network at Raymont Residential College to deliver competitive internet access speeds for students. The feedback from students has been very positive.
- As part of the Synod office restructure, the role of Chief Information Officer (CIO) was introduced as Information Technology continues to work towards enabling the Synod office to be 'Organised for mission'. The CIO will focus the team on delivering strategic information systems that capture and provide timely and accurate information to decision-makers.

## Alexandra Park Conference Centre

Alexandra Park continues to be an industry leader in the provision of group accommodation to schools, churches and community groups, predominantly from South East Queensland.

In 2016/2017:

- 67% of our guests were school groups
- 23% were churches or Christian organisations (only 2% of total guests were Uniting Church congregation groups)
- Of the church/Christian groups, 39% were youth groups, 59% were multi-age retreats and conferences
- 181 groups overall
- \$2.483m revenue
- \$138,600 provided to Mission Support Fund and mission discounts to Uniting Church entities
- \$435,000 surplus
- 35 staff on payroll = 14 FTE.

In association with Mary Burnett Presbytery we continue to explore what it is to be the church on the Sunshine Coast and how we connect with and support the wider community.

Usage of Alexandra Park has remained relatively stable for the past three years and we have recognised the need for a change in marketing and promotion. We have recently conducted a marketing review to set our priorities and direction for the future. Through this process we have also reviewed our staffing structure to ensure it is aligned with our strategy.

## Raymont Residential College

Located on the Auchenflower campus, Raymont Residential College provides student accommodation for up to 119 tertiary students studying throughout Brisbane. The college seeks to enrich the personal well-being and academic development of our tertiary/university students within a caring community built on Christian values.

### Achievements

The college focus since the last Synod has been to return to its historical tradition of providing a comprehensive collegiate experience to all students. This includes:

- Adjustment to the staffing structure and support programs of the college
- Appointment of a principal living on-site to provide support and care during business and after-hours
- Introduction of positions such as adjunct academic advisor, business manager and Dean of Students

- Introduction of an Academic Support Program and a Leadership Certificate Course
- Delivery of improved student training, new support programs and improved services to the students
- Complete upgrade of the student Internet network leading to more reliable service, greater coverage and increased speeds for students to enable them to better complete their academic studies.

## Challenges/risks as we progress

Challenges and what we are doing:

- Building the Synod Reserve Fund to cover future emergencies
  - We are five years into a 10-year strategy to rebuild the emergency fund.
- Funding models for ongoing funding of the Synod office
  - Revised and alternative funding sources are to be considered over the next three years.
- The probable impact of sexual abuse civil litigation/redress claims
  - The financial impact is unknown
  - The Interim Redress Scheme has been operating successfully for over a year
  - Civil litigation is being addressed on a case-by-case basis.
- Investment returns in a low-interest rate environment
  - The Investment Policy has been broadened to now include investment in equities and other higher return long-term assets.
- Cybersecurity
  - Regular maintenance window introduced to ensure all systems are checked and maintained.
- The continuing process of determining the future use of the Alexandra Park site
  - Work with the Sunshine Coast Regional Council and obtain the DA. We can then prepare an options analysis for Standing Committee consideration.
- Increase in the number of commercial operators providing student accommodation in Brisbane. Increase expected from 4,643 beds in 2016 to 8,661 beds in 2020. This could impact the occupancy and profitability of Raymont Residential College. We are considering:
  - Increasing offering to students
  - Targeted marketing and awareness of Raymont services.

## Proposal

It is proposed that the 33rd Synod receive this report.

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### Contact for report questions:

Name: Peter Cranna  
 Position: former Director – Finance and Property Services.  
 Email: [peter.cranna@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:peter.cranna@ucaqld.com.au) Phone: 07 3377 9711



# #realunitingchurch

## Report from Communications and marketing

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### Context

As part of the Synod office restructure in July 2017, Uniting Communications changed its name to Communications and marketing. The fundraising and research functions (and roles) moved into different portfolios within the Synod office. The purpose and structure of the communications and marketing functions remain under review. The roadmap for implementation of the recommendations from this review is expected to be completed in October.

Prior to the Synod office restructure Uniting Communications was the communications, marketing, fundraising and research team of the Queensland Synod office.

Communications and marketing continues to give a voice to and connect diverse ideas, people and churches within the broader Uniting Church in Queensland through Uniting News, *Journey* magazine (print and online), videos and podcasts and via Synod social media platforms including Facebook and Twitter.

We manage the reputation of the Queensland Synod within and beyond the church, for example by managing media requests for official Uniting Church comment from the moderator or advising congregations on how to deal with negative publicity.

We support all parts of the Synod office to maintain professional, cohesive resources as well as supporting the marketing of the Uniting Church Foundation, Alexandra Park Conference Centre, Raymont Residential College and Trinity College Queensland.

We help congregations maximise their communications opportunities in their local communities through activities like the Christmas and Easter resources.

We also help the church and the public understand the role of the moderator and the church in society.

Participation in ecumenical and national Uniting Church communications networks continues to be an encouraging and productive part of our work.

## Foci since the 32nd Synod

The Communications and marketing team's foci since the last Synod meeting have primarily been around supporting the work required by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (mostly in regards to Shalom Christian College), promoting the 40th anniversary of the Uniting Church, redesigning the Synod website, exploring the revised Priority Directions and assisting in the production and promotion of resources like the Safe Ministry with Children suite and the RE framework.

## Highlights

Some of the highlights since the last Synod:

The **coverage of the 32nd Synod** was particularly successful with 21 articles posted on JourneyOnline over the four days and unique content shared on social media. Facebook engagement increased by 7796 per cent during the 32nd Synod and unique visitors to JourneyOnline increased by 55 per cent. The communications team completed 74 tasks and items of collateral (from branding and proof-reading reports to creating flyers and signage) for the 32nd Synod including a wrap-up video of the Unchained event—an event that we were instrumental in planning.

In January 2017 we rolled out a new Synod website.

*Journey* won three Australasian Religious Press Association (ARPA) Awards in 2016: Dianne Jensen's profile on Uniting Church member and physicist [Dr Joel Corney](#) won the best profile category and Bruce Mullan's exploration of the Uniting Church's [marriage discussions](#) won bronze for best theological article. *Journey* also won the silver award for the coveted category of best design (magazine). Ashley Thompson was awarded a scholarship to attend the conference and addressed those gathered for the awards ceremony.

This year, *Journey* won two ARPA awards. Ben Rogers won a bronze for 'best new writer' for his profile on controversial Queensland creationist [Ken Ham](#). Dianne Jensen and Ben Rogers won a silver award for 'best feature, multiple authors' for their feature story on [Indigenous incarceration and First Peoples prison chaplains](#).

With over 300 entries in the awards each year, this recognition is a reminder that our *Journey* magazine stands out amongst Christian publications from across Australia and New Zealand.

It was wonderful to see so many congregations, schools and agencies using the **40th anniversary** celebration pack materials. The 40th anniversary video had excellent engagement on social media, helping us share some of the core elements that make up the Uniting Church with potentially untapped audiences.

There has been significant work on internal communications at the Synod office, particularly with the development and maintenance of a staff intranet.

In-house video productions since the last Synod include:

- Unchained video wrap-up
- Two Christmas 2016 videos
- Easter 2017 video
- Three *Journey*: 'the big questions' videos
- Short videos of the moderator for the Monday midday prayer series

- Facebook videos, particularly related to the 32nd Synod
- A promotional video for Trinity College Queensland (in progress).

## Priority Directions

The Synod-wide Priority Directions underpin everything we do. Here are some examples of our work in this space.

### Christ-centred, at prayer, and listening

**Monday midday prayer** continues across a number of our communications channels including *Journey*, Uniting News, social media and the Synod website and is displayed in the foyer of the Uniting Church Centre in Auchenflower. A new initiative proving popular is videos of the moderator saying the prayer. These are particularly popular on Facebook.

As part of the **Christmas 2016** *Hope has a name* campaign we released a video of poet Nyaluak Leth reciting a poem/prayer she wrote to enhance the theme.

A #realunitingchurch **podcast** on prayer and Christian meditation will be released in September 2017.

### Discipleship

Significant editing and design was done on the RE framework for Uniting Church schools. Mardi Lumsden was the MC for two Stretching Faith panel discussions for the Bremer Brisbane/Moreton Rivers presbyteries young adult events.

### Leadership

The team has done editing, design, communications planning and implementation on the following:

- The leadership development framework
- The placements review process
- Royal Commission/Shalom Christian College
- Interim Redress Scheme refresh and major communications plan
- Safe Ministry with Children documents and micro-site (editing, designing, updating and maintaining forms, training modules, etc.)
- RE in Uniting Church schools framework
- #realunitingchurch podcast episode on leadership.

### Connecting with communities

Since the 32nd Synod, the **Uniting Church Foundation's** fundraising activities included:

- Easter Madness Appeal to enable faith and leadership opportunities for 18 young people in regional, rural and remote Queensland.
- Reach Out Appeal to enable funding for an asylum seeker from Papua New Guinea to be awarded refugee status in Australia.
- \$10 for 10 Appeal to enable vocational training courses for Indigenous students from Unity College and Sunshine Coast Grammar School.
- Disaster Relief Appeal to enable community recovery in North and Central Queensland for those impacted by Cyclone Debbie.
- Community fundraising via book sales of *The Man on the \$20 Note* by Uniting Church elder Everald Compton, who donated funds from book sales to the Mission Area of Indigenous Education, and the Entertainment Book 2016/2017.

The **2016 Christmas campaign** *Hope has a name* saw 30 congregations purchase postcards with 62,000 cards distributed across Queensland as well as New South Wales and Victoria. An accompanying social media campaign (including two short videos) was beautifully executed.

Through research officer Sue Hutchinson and research officer/Uniting Green liaison David Weddell (each three days per week) the church has made submissions to a number of government inquiries including:

- Inquiry into Abortion Law Reform by the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee (July 2016)
- Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee regarding the Health (Abortion Law Reform) Amendment Bill 2016 (October 2016)
- Towards an All Abilities Queensland Consultation (April 2017)
- Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee Inquiry into the Child Protection and Education Legislation (Reporting of Abuse) Amendment Bill 2017 (June 2017).

The research officers are active in a number of ecumenical and national Uniting Church social justice and environmental groups as well the Queensland Community Alliance. In June 2017 they presented a workshop on social justice action at Indooroopilly Uniting Church. The fortnightly Reach Out Speak Out enews has 170 subscribers and the alternate fortnightly Uniting Green Update enews has 273 subscribers. In early September 2017 the new Reach Out Speak Out Facebook group had 73 members.

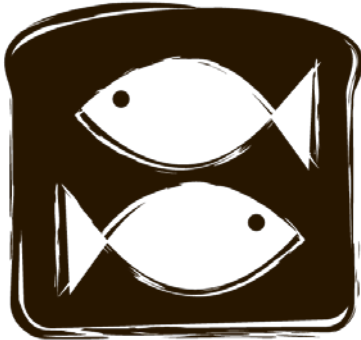
Work continues with the **Chaplaincy Commission** to produce a major promotional video celebrating the breadth and depth of chaplaincy across the Uniting Church in Queensland. This video will be launched at the 33rd Synod. Accompanying resources including a chaplaincy micro-site on the Synod website will be created in addition to the resources created for Chaplaincy Sunday and the Chaplaincy Affirmation Days in 2016 and 2017.

### **Youth, children and families**

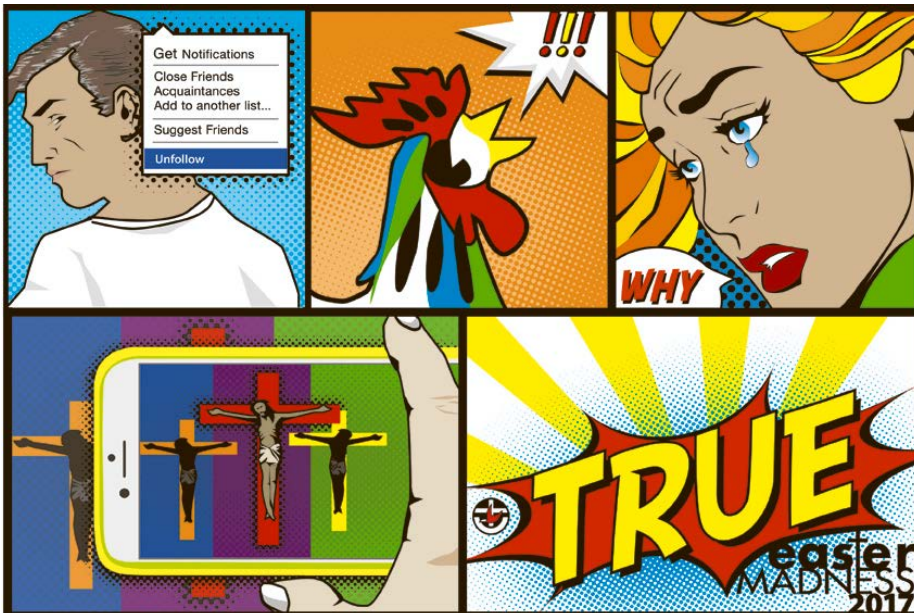
The work the communications and marketing team have done in the space of youth, children and families is primarily around the brand design and proof-reading and design of documents. We supported the creation of Safe Ministry with Children resources and the micro-site on [ucaqld.com.au](http://ucaqld.com.au). We have assisted in the creation of the RE in Uniting Church schools framework alongside the Schools and Residential Colleges Commission.

The #realunitingchurch podcast included an episode on young people and the church and *Journey* has featured many stories on activities for youth and children such as day camps, Easter and Country Madness and Yurora.

Team members worked with Steve Molkenntin to create the Bread Fish Too logo (below).



We also worked with the Easter Madness committee to create the Easter Madness appeal and Easter Madness 2017 branding (below).



**... as the church grows, transitions and innovates.**

Throughout 2016 Mardi Lumsden and Scott Guyatt produced the **Church Unchained** podcast. The podcast series explored innovation and the church and featured nine episodes with 978 total listens (an average of 108 listeners per episode). The most popular episode was on what the church can learn from virtual reality and [Pokémon Go](#) (235 listens).

Assistance has been provided to Trinity College Queensland in communicating their transition and promoting events. *Journey* also regularly features columns and videos with Trinity faculty. We have worked closely with Raymont Residential College to review their branding and marketing collateral after a name change and shift in service offerings at the start of 2017, including a redesign of the Raymont website.



Communications and marketing team members were instrumental in the planning and delivery of the Synod Unchained event at the 32nd Synod and produced a [wrap-up video](#) of the event.

We are currently preparing a Synod office annual report to be released as part of the October 2017 edition of *Journey*.

## Report

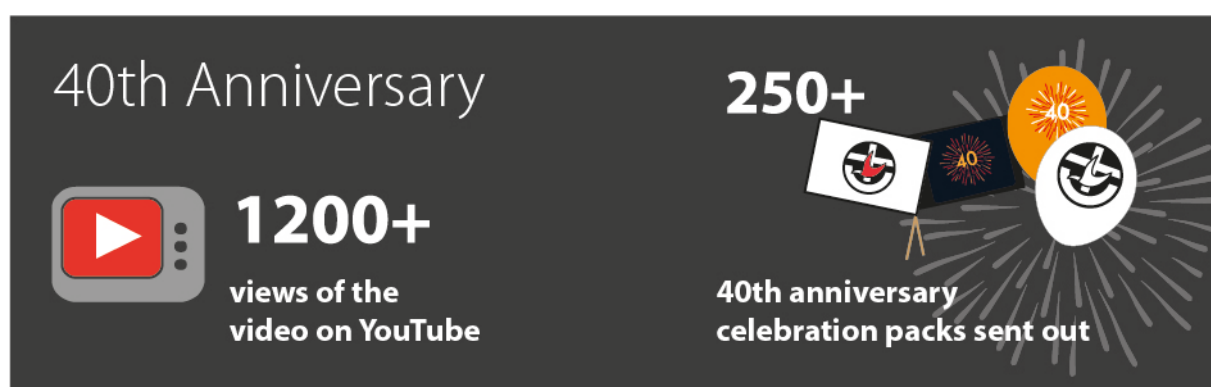
### 40th anniversary

More than 250 congregation celebration packs were sent across Queensland to help congregations celebrate the anniversary of the Uniting Church in their own way. The resources were used by our schools and agencies as well as in some other Synods and the Assembly.

The 40th anniversary video had great engagement and feedback. Thank you to all who were involved. Throughout 2017 there have been monthly features and additional content around the 40th anniversary in *Journey* print and online and across social media platforms. Many congregations have shared photographs of their celebrations via the Synod Facebook page.

The [#realunitingchurch](#) podcast series began in January 2017. It explores the core identity of the Uniting Church during its 40th year and where the church might go in the next 40 years. The series picks up the theme of the 33rd Synod and endeavours to be conversation starters about a range of topics that the Uniting Church in Queensland is grappling with in the lead up to this Synod in Session. This series intentionally has a more internal audience than the Church Unchained podcast series.

Total listens (at time of submission) was 473 for seven episodes (average per episode of 67.6 listens). The most popular episode to date is "[What if the church had a mid-life crisis?](#)" This series will continue until at least the 33rd Synod.



### Royal Commission

An external consultancy was temporarily commissioned to assist with communications around the church and Shalom Christian College giving evidence at the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in November 2016. As a result there remains a significant amount of work relating to crisis communications and media relations.

## Upgrade of ucaqld.com.au

A refreshed Synod website was launched in January 2017 after six months of work. The new site is more mobile-friendly and responds to feedback from users. It remains a work in progress. Stage two of the website is to review all content and continue to maximise the user experience and SEO (search engine optimisation). The chaplaincy micro-site will be online before the 33rd Synod.

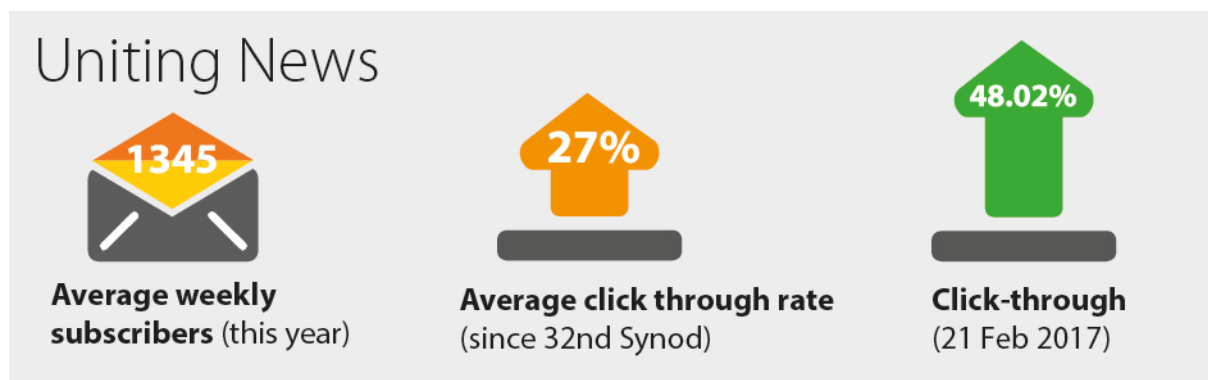
A review of the 'Find a church' function is on the horizon, ideally to incorporate search topics beyond 'location' (e.g. if a congregation has children's programs).



## Uniting News

The weekly enews from the general secretary, Uniting News is delivered to an average of 1345 people each Tuesday afternoon. Those in positions of responsibility (placements, church council chairpersons, etc.) are required to receive Uniting News as it contains important information from the Synod office and other parts of the Uniting Church.

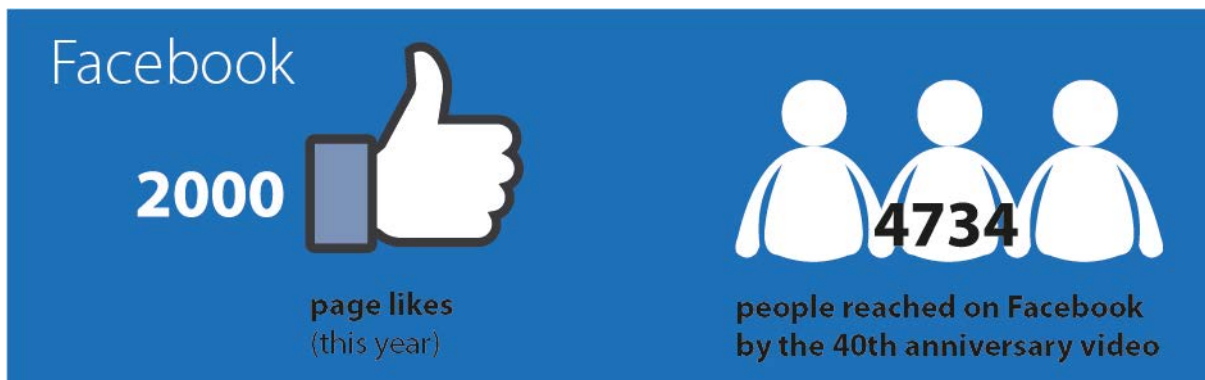
Twenty seven per cent of users click a link in each edition. The highest click-through rate was over 48 per cent in February this year. According to Campaign Monitor, a healthy click-through rate is around 15 per cent.



## Social media

There has been continued growth and engagement on our social media channels, particularly Facebook. Social media is and will continue to be an important place for the church to engage. We now have 2000 Facebook page likes, which was our aim by the 33rd Synod. While page

likes are important, it is more important to have an engaged audience, so we measure the success of social media campaigns by audience engagement (post likes, shares, comments, etc.).



### UnitingWomen 2018

The Synod office is developing and implementing a marketing plan for the UnitingWomen conference to be held at Somerville House in Brisbane on 20–23 September 2018. The conference will be officially launched at the 33rd Synod. The theme is “Weaving wisdom and wonder” and we hope women from all Queensland congregations will attend.



## Challenges/risks as we progress

We have a current challenge around the clarity and priority of messages (Priority Directions, Key Change Initiatives, 40th anniversary, #realunitingchurch, etc.) and the integration of these messages into one cohesive message. Some of these issues will be addressed through the communications review.

One way to assist in conveying complex messages is through video. Consequently, there is an increased need for dynamic video resources from the Synod office, Trinity, Raymont and Alex Park. Video production requires particular skills which need to be appropriately invested in and resourced. However, videos provide an opportunity for the Synod to share its desired messages in a creative and sharable way.

The way people access news, television, movies, music and even church services has drastically shifted in recent years. On-demand streaming services have transformed how we access television and films. People can watch Life.Church or download Bill Hybels' latest Willow Creek sermon if they can't get to their local church.

If the Uniting Church is to be truly innovative in connecting with people on platforms like streaming services (e.g. Netflix), social media and podcasting we will need to change how we think and invest in sharing information. We will need to lead the way in how the church engages with and is part of popular culture. We often lament the lack of Uniting Church voices in public discourse about religion in society. Perhaps we should create our own? Imagine a Uniting Church version of *Q and A*, a documentary series on the church and community at Mapoon or a pre-packaged radio show about cross-culturalism or church planting that is syndicated around Australia and maybe even the world!

To do this would require investment, long-term vision and commitment and the necessary resources. This approach would not be without risk, but what is the risk if the Uniting Church remains silent in these spaces?

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### Contact for report questions:

Name: Mardi Lumsden  
Position: Manager, communications and marketing  
Email: [communications@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:communications@ucaqld.com.au) Phone: 3377 9910



#realunitingchurch

Report from

## **Rural and Remote Ministry Task Group: Interim Report**

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### Context

The report is intended to capture a number of factors that are influencing the form of the church in rural and remote communities.

# Contents

Introduction	2
1: Background	2
2: Definitions	2
Conform to ASGS standards.....	3
Manage anomalies by exception .....	3
Use SEIFA as an index.....	4
3: Needs and Opportunities	4
The changing nature of Sunday worship.....	4
Infrastructure.....	5
The use of technology .....	5
The place of the church building.....	5
The role of a ministry agent .....	5
Partnerships.....	6
Finding the rhythm of the community - Responsiveness to local community changes .....	6
Collaboration across all Uniting Church activities .....	6
Local ecumenism.....	6
Social Capital.....	7
Training and preparation for leadership in a rural and remote community.....	7
Compliance .....	8
4: Current Resourcing	9
The data – congregational returns.....	9
The data – property utilisation survey .....	9
5: Future Forms	10
Kitto report .....	11
Possible structural models .....	13
Infrastructure.....	14
Digital support models .....	14
Beyond the building - reconsidering the use of church resources .....	15
Training for ministry in a rural or remote setting .....	15
Partnerships.....	16
Regional gatherings.....	16
Broader support networks .....	16
Spirited generosity .....	16
Collaboration across all Uniting Church activities .....	16
Ecumenical partnerships.....	17
Change theory and opportunity cost .....	17
Successful and proven models.....	18
6: Ongoing Resourcing	18
7: Recommendations	
<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>	
8: References	19



# Introduction

The approach taken in this paper is to set a framework of understanding through which decisions around rural and remote ministry can be made. It doesn't require a large community for church members to be seen to living out their faith. **Ministry of place** is a term used to describe how the context of a community influences the form of the Christian response to that community. Christian worship, witness and service has had many and varied forms over time. However the overarching expectation that God will guide the church in its tangible presence is one that is captured in the Uniting Church's understanding of itself as a pilgrim people.

The report is intended to capture a number of factors that are influencing the form of the church in rural and remote communities. Each section is intended to unpack some of the real consequences of our changing community structure. The final section allows us to imagine what the community of Christ might look like with some intentional and appropriately resourced strategies in place.

## 1: Background

The Rural and Remote Ministry Task Group was formed as a result of a decision of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Synod. The decision states:

- It was **RESOLVED by Consensus** that the Synod –
- (a) receives the Report of the Presbytery of The Downs
  - (b) appoints a Rural and Remote Ministry Task Group, under the supervision of Synod Standing Committee (SSC) to:
    - (i) define “rural” and “remote” as it will apply to this ministry setting
    - (ii) identify the needs and the opportunities in rural and remote locations
    - (iii) review current resourcing for ministry in rural and remote locations
    - (iv) identify future forms of ministry that are appropriate
    - (v) provide progress reports to SSC meetings
    - (vi) make recommendation(s) to SSC to secure long term, sustainable resourcing of Rural and Remote Ministry in this Synod;
  - (c) requests the Rural and Remote Ministry Task Group to finalise its work by the end of May 2017.

The Task Group was assembled in August 2016 by the Synod Standing Committee and consists of:

- Heather den Houting (Synod, Convenor)
- Garry Hardingham (North Queensland)
- David Ferguson (Mary Burnett)
- Rob McFarlane (Moreton Rivers)
- Jenny Coombes (Central Qld)
- John Case (The Downs)
- Scott Guyatt (Synod, resourcing to the Task Group)

## 2: Definitions

Define “rural” and “remote” as it will apply to this ministry setting

It is no simple task to determine a clear and straightforward definition of rural and remote locations. The matter has exercised state and federal Government agencies for over 40



years with numerous models and iterations. A very helpful summary is provided in a paper written by Douglas Jones <sup>1</sup>.

## Conform to ASGS standards

For the purposes of this project, the remoteness structure which forms part of the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) will be used to assess degrees of rurality and remoteness. In essence, this structure defines remoteness on the basis of road distance from service centres of five (5) various sizes<sup>2</sup>. The remoteness structure is divided into five (5) values of remoteness and these have been equated to rural and remote definitions for the purposes of this report as below:

1.	Very Remote Australia	Very Remote
2.	Remote Australia	Remote
3.	Outer Regional Australia	Outer Rural
4.	Inner Regional Australia	Inner Rural
5.	Major Cities of Australia	

Conforming to standards established by the ABS will:

- ensure that the church will be applying a consistent methodology to any other recognised body
- allow access to and the use of consistent mapping tools and statistical data should it be required
- facilitate the incorporation of additional definitions such as socio-economics profiles and an indigenous areas structure

Maps outlining these boundaries on both a state and national level are contained in the appendices.

## Manage anomalies by exception

It is acknowledged that within these various measures of remoteness, apparent anomalies may appear when considered in the context of congregational ministering. For example, the Lockyer Valley is considered to have the same degree of remoteness as a larger centre such as Rockhampton as a result of the methodology that uses distance from several classes of service centres including a large centre such as Brisbane. However, when such anomalies may impact on matters contained within this project, the impact on considerations and outcomes can be dealt with by exception.

It is also acknowledged that these measures do not necessarily provide a separate definition for “rural”. Such as definition could perhaps more appropriately be based on economic boundaries rather than geographical, and incorporate those areas where the community is predominantly reliant upon primary industry and therefore subject to a more varied impact by nature of climatic and seasonal influences.

However, similar impacts can be seen in any community that relies predominantly on one industry or employer such as an educational centre, transport hub or research facility. Such community wide impact can even encompass micro communities within a more urbanised area. For example, changes at the Sanitarium factory in Brisbane can have a significant

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<sup>1</sup> Jones, Douglas. 2014. A Contribution to the National Consultation: Understandings of Remoteness in Australia

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.adelaide.edu.au/apmrc/>

impact on the local Seventh Day Adventist congregation and school. The recent closure of vehicle manufacturing plants have decimated Geelong and northern Adelaide changing growing epi-centres. While these are interstate examples they indicate impact on urban areas and also reflect outcomes in Acacia Ridge in 1984 when 1,000 jobs were lost with the closure of the GMH factory. Acacia Ridge was built around the manufacturing plant and streets still carry the names of cars produced. Along with the job losses, the closure of the factory impacted on all the local businesses where workers shopped.

Given there is no accepted methodology in place to establish boundaries based on economic dependencies and such a piece of work would be time consuming and subject to change, it is proposed that the nature of rurality may be more appropriately considered within the sociological aspects of later sections of this report.

### Use SEIFA as an index

Using the ABS definitions also opens the door to the use of a socio-economic index, SEIFA (2011)<sup>3</sup>, which can be overlaid onto a remoteness map to better define those areas that may be impacted by remoteness. The ABS primarily defines socio-economic status on the basis of “people’s access to material and social resources, and their ability to participate in society”. There are four (4) indexes that provide a slightly different aspect of the socio-economic conditions in an area. In summary, these indicate relative disadvantage or advantage on a general basis or they apply a lens based either on income and wealth or education and occupation. Usually individual indices are summarised to one overall measure which is generally used. However, there may occasions when specific measures may be of greater value when contextualising.

## 3: Needs and Opportunities

Identify the needs and the opportunities in rural and remote locations

It is widely acknowledged that rural and remote areas are facing significant challenges impacting on economies and lifestyle. Ageing populations, physical and mental health issues, difficulty in accessing support services and the lack of long-term employment are contributing to declining populations and the resultant breakdown of communities and social vitality. This section outlines not just the current situation or needs of these communities but also some of the opportunities presented and open to the Uniting Church by the changing face of rural and remote locations. It touches upon a range key points in order to set the scene for considering possible future models. This section of the report particularly acknowledges the work of Rob Stoner from the Mission Resourcing Network UCA Presbytery and Synod of SA in his 2006 paper *What does it mean to be “Church” the Rural Community?*

### The changing nature of Sunday worship

Sunday worship in the past was the entrée to a wider social fabric of church activities but now it is frequently the only activity of a church. Simply changing the nature of the service to attract more attendees isn’t practical if there isn’t a suitable community to draw from. Maintaining the focus on traditional Sunday worship gatherings can be a considerable burden to an ageing and shrinking congregation. Such gatherings could in some cases be more readily operated from a community or private location. Small group gatherings, emphasising the discipleship practice of hospitality, could be more varied in terms of approach, including options such as house church, prayer meetings, bible study or more open life question forums. The meeting place could be private houses, community space, or

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<sup>3</sup><http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/2033.0.55.001~2011~Main%20Features~Main%20Page~1>

a local café or pub. That said, encouraging a group of people who are set in their ideas of what church is to engage with and trial change, is likely to take time, patience and sensitivity. In such circumstances, change will only happen where the leader has established they are present for the long term and relationships involving two-way trust and respect have formed.

## *Infrastructure*

### **The use of technology**

Changes to technology have opened up many different opportunities for supporting churches in rural or remote settings. While the virtual approach opens many doors, it is highly unlikely to completely replace the need for people to gather and worship. Nevertheless there are many opportunities that can be explored to determine ways in which technology can be utilised to enhance and/or support church communities. A fuller treatment will be given to this issue elsewhere in this paper.

### **The place of the church building**

Together with providing a home for the congregation and its activities, an identifiable church building symbolises that the church is present in a community in a physical, tangible way. Any closure or sale of the building can impact not only the congregation itself, but the broader community through a sense of loss and further abandonment or removal of institutional support for the community.

Nonetheless at a time when the maintenance of property is becoming a significant financial and human resource burden on many congregations in rural and remote areas, we must be open to theological and practical consideration of the place of the building in the life of a community. A discipleship community can take many forms – only some of which are dependent upon a purpose-built facility, and a church can take its place in the life of a community in many ways, only some of which are dependent on a physical site to operate from. Investigating different models and relationships between congregation and property would be a worthwhile investment of resources.

### **The role of a ministry agent**

Historically a minister formed part of the professional network within a community; someone who brought in fresh blood and new ideas for the period of their appointment. Along with leading the community of faith in worship and discipleship, the minister often filled an invaluable role as confidante for the problems and secrets of life in complete trust. This may be part due to the nature of minister as being part of the rural or remote community but also viewed as slightly separate due to the cycle of placements, and in part due to the nature and perception of ministry itself. Reliance on this model however, can have the side-effect of limiting the capacity of the congregation to meet these needs itself, and with declining resources in many rural communities the minister-centric structure may no longer be viable in its current form. In the absence of an ordained minister, an effective lay-led congregation that can engage with the broader community is key for vital engagement. Having a person that is committed to their community, and physically part of it, is highly valued. Value is also ascribed to a leader of both standing and time as many areas suffer from newcomer fatigue and the degree to which they are prepared to share their life is dependent on the commitment and longevity they observe. Often a community looks to the church to provide a recognised figure head for those special occasions that form part of the rhythm of a community. While lay leaders may be comfortable in taking a role within the church, this broader community representation can be challenging. In addition, lay leaders who have formed an integral part of the community over many years are often not able to play the role of confidante as they do not hold the same degree of separation that a minister or external lay leader does.

Changes in this area may push the church to consider its understanding and practice of ordination, and the ways in which both ordained ministers and lay leaders function. In many rural and remote presbyteries around Australia the role of the ministry agent has been transformed into resource ministry. This means that, rather than stretching ministers more and more thinly doing the traditional roles of pastoral care and preaching, ministers are now supporting congregations to live out their worship, witness and service. This means that ministers are now primarily focussed on oversight, equipping, teaching and team-leading. This has profound implications for selection of candidates for ministry, how they are formed, and their continuing education.

## Partnerships

### **Finding the rhythm of the community - responsiveness to local community changes**

There is a need across all societies for true and authentic communities that incorporate belonging, acceptance, trust and interdependence. There is a need to develop enablers for the church community to foster such environments and as such it is important to identify the rhythm of each individual community. Such rhythm may be grounded in community events, a fly-in fly-out workforce or harvest times, for example. Questions regarding the 'what' and 'where' of gathering points within the community need to be asked and answered in order to build a church that syncs with this rhythm.

Church members living out their faith are the backbone of a church community. This doesn't mean flawless perfection but approaching relationships, work, business and socialisation as people with a depth and meaning to life, trust-worthy, honest, forgiving and with a heart for others. This will require church members to give themselves to their community — not carrying the community on their shoulders but responding to the Spirit of God in choosing how to use their time and efforts. This is, in a sense, the process of a missional discipleship.

It is key for any church community, whether rural, remote or otherwise, to be active in developing faith in Jesus Christ among its members and adherents. This includes offering entry point opportunities across all ages through community activities that engage those outside the church community. Particularly in small communities, if services and activities are going to be successful they need to appeal to the wider community, much of which does not have a church involvement.

There has been much discussion as to the needs of the church community in these locations and the Kitto<sup>4</sup> report outlines a number of successful strategies currently utilised across the synod. It is critical to ask what would the broader community want, value, expect or will gladly accept from the church community. This is an opportunity to be explored in each congregational context as part of a robust, intentional and strategic planning exercise.

### **Collaboration across all Uniting Church activities**

When establishing the rhythm of each community and looking at contextual solutions, it is important to consider the interplay of activities across the whole church. This includes the role of service agencies as well as aligning strategies across various bodies such as the UAICC and Frontier Services. These can be valuable platforms upon which to base intentional church gatherings as well as a vital part of the wider community rhythm and social support structure within communities being affected by economic and demographic factors.

### **Local ecumenism**

An effective collaboration with other denominations to develop faith in the community rather than an attitude of competitiveness is one way to harness the necessary resources to

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<sup>4</sup> Kitto, Carolyn, Spirited Consulting. 2016. Life & Mission Consultation Queensland Synod Presbyteries

support a church community. While this appears to be a logical and straight forward solution, unexpected complexities frequently surface to hinder implementation. Such collaborations are difficult and depend on individual relationships and/or community cultures together with structural factors. Sometimes blockages occur at the grass roots, while at other times they are experienced at more senior or structural levels. Support from and between denominational hierarchies is integral to greater success.

## Social Capital

The General Social Survey<sup>5</sup> (GSS) measures resources that reflect the wellbeing of individuals and communities, with social capital being a particular focus. Social capital is conceived as a resource available to individuals and communities, and founded on networks of mutual support, reciprocity and trust. Research links strong social capital to increased individual and community wellbeing. It includes elements such as community support, social participation, civic participation, network size, trust and trustworthiness, and an ability for individuals to have a level of control of issues important to them. The survey is undertaken every four years with the following information comparing results between the latest surveys in 2010 and 2014. In 2014, people were less likely to be involved in social groups such as sport, recreation, arts or religious or civic participations such as professional political, union, environmental or human or animal rights associations. Since 2010 involvement has decreased by some 4-5%. An individual's perception of their ability to have a say in their community has also similarly been reduced. While non face to face contact with family and friends has remained stable, face to face contact with those outside the household has decreased. However, the ways in which people support each other such as care within or outside the home has remained stable. In particular the number and variety of attachments that people have remain high with 95% of people feeling they could access support from outside their house in time of crisis.

The change in social capital is assessed across a range of demographical cohorts including on the basis of remoteness. A variation of 10% was reported in the ability to access services between outer rural and remote Australia compared to major cities (note this comparison excludes those in inner rural areas). The main services noted were doctors, dentists, telecommunication services and government services such as Centrelink and the main difficulties expressed were wait time or suitable appointment times with the lack of services being less commonly reported.

While those in outer rural or remote areas were less likely to have participated in a sport, recreational or cultural activity; they had greater levels of community involvement. They were more likely to participate in a community support group or feel they have a say within the community on important issues. The greater distance between neighbours did not prevent individuals from interacting in person and they were more likely to have had face to face contact outside the household than their urban counterparts. However, they were less likely to have used technology for communication and their access to technology varied according to geography.

## Training and preparation for leadership in a rural and remote community

Leadership is an integral part of such community involvement and is an essential component for effective rural and remote ministry, particularly in this changing environment. Supported communities can be very creative but threatened ones will go to default. There is a reputational risk to the church when leading churches to change as relationally close communities can mean that disharmony with one person or a small group is likely to affect many relationships in the community.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4159.0>

Leaders need well developed transitional and change management skills to support communities to adapt to a new way of being; along with the capacity to manage conflict and to support and manage the associated grief that change brings. Particular challenges within broader communities that are undergoing significant economic and social changes include a capacity to identify and subvert unhealthy church practices. It is critical to recognise that both ministerial agents and lay leaders engaged in bringing change to communities need ongoing support through these challenges. The process will be long and complex requiring a great deal of patience and resilience. Leaders who are innovative and who are adept at offering a flexible approach to nurturing faith need to be trained and resourced, raising the challenge of how such resources and training can be developed and delivered.

Succession planning is also a priority at this time given the potential rate at which rural and remote ministers will retire. The challenges of working in rural and remote areas is making it difficult to fill these placements. In addition to the work related challenges there are barriers due to employment opportunities for partners and schooling opportunities for children, particularly at the secondary level and beyond. These barriers can be more perception than reality and opportunities need to be taken to ensure potential candidates are well informed.

## Compliance

There is a community and governance expectation that church and church activities will be safe and accountable places. In the wake of ongoing misconduct scenarios, compliance is being tightened across multiple fronts. Compliance requirements are only likely to increase over time, at the same time that churches are looking for innovative approaches to community engagement. This results in a heightened risk environment and as church communities become smaller, compliance requirements around safe ministry as well as financial obligations become more burdensome. Models of Presbytery or Synod supported compliance are necessary, particularly for more remote communities.

## 4: Current Resourcing

Review current resourcing for ministry in rural and remote locations

Resourcing is a term with a wide and varied meaning. In this case it has been interpreted as encompassing financial, staffing and attendance figures at both the congregational and presbytery level.

### The data – congregational returns

In order to gain an overall understanding, a brief review has been undertaken of the 2015 Annual Financial Returns submitted to the Synod office by individual congregations within each presbytery (excluding Calvary, for whom very limited data was returned). For the purposes of this exercise Bremer, Moreton Rivers and South Moreton have been regarded as urban presbyteries while Central and Northern Queensland, Mary Burnett and The Downs are regarded as rural and remote (R&R). It is not suggested that this review is all encompassing but it does scope some comparable resource related data from the information that is available.

- 2 out of 4 of the R&R presbyteries have a similar level of congregations with appointed ministers as the urban presbyteries, although it is acknowledged that this does not take account of congregation size or the FTE of ministerial appointments.
- R&R presbyteries have a larger proportion than their urban counterparts of congregations who have an improved financial position (surplus/deficit) in 2015 than was the case in 2013. The proportion of congregations in surplus in 2015 is generally slightly lower in 2 R&R presbyteries than the average urban presbytery. However, the highest performing presbytery is R&R and the lowest is urban.
- The proportion of congregations whose annual attendance has improved since 2013 is fairly evenly matched across urban and R&R presbyteries with the exception of 1 R&R presbytery which has a lower proportion.
- The number of attendees per congregation (averaged across the whole presbytery) varies across presbyteries but generally, numbers in R&R presbyteries are not considerably lower. In considering individual congregational sizes, with the exception of 1 presbytery, R&R presbyteries have a similar proportion of congregations with less than 50 attendees to urban presbyteries. However R&R presbyteries have a larger proportion of these with less than 30 attendees.
- Attendances as a proportion of population (as assessed from the last Presbytery reports to Synod in Session) shows that the proportion who attend a Uniting Church is, generally, slightly higher in R&R areas than urban.
- General Offerings received per attendee also varies across presbyteries but the performance in R&R areas is similar to urban profiles. Similarly, total income per attendee shows similar profiling.

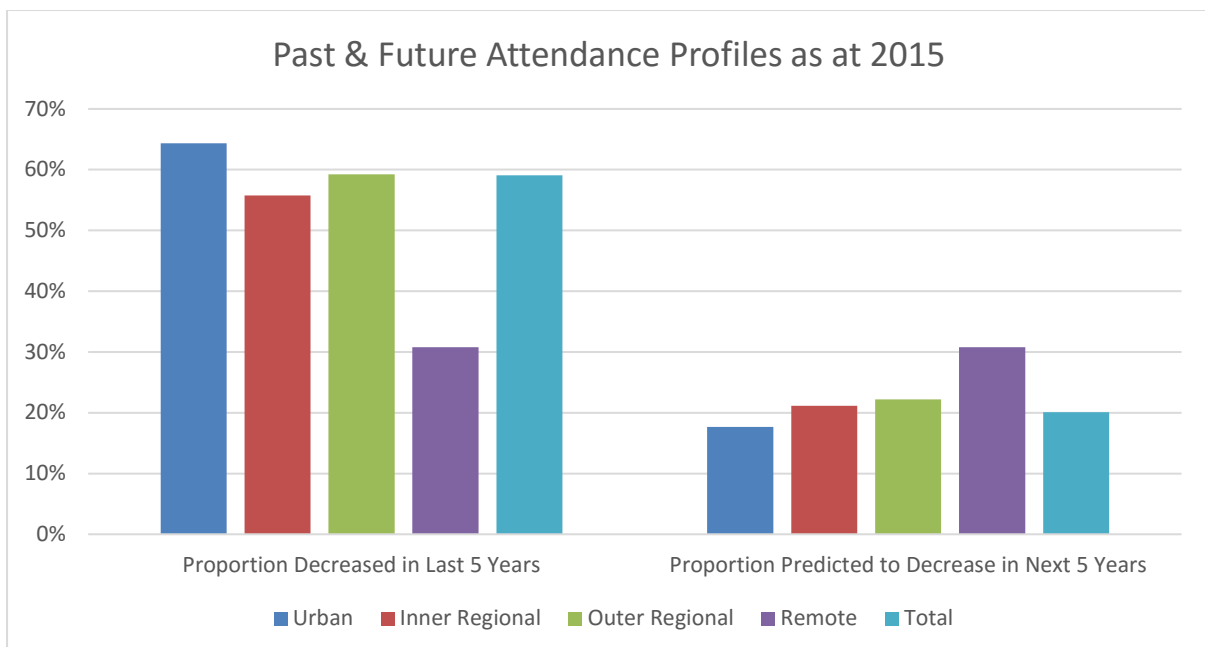
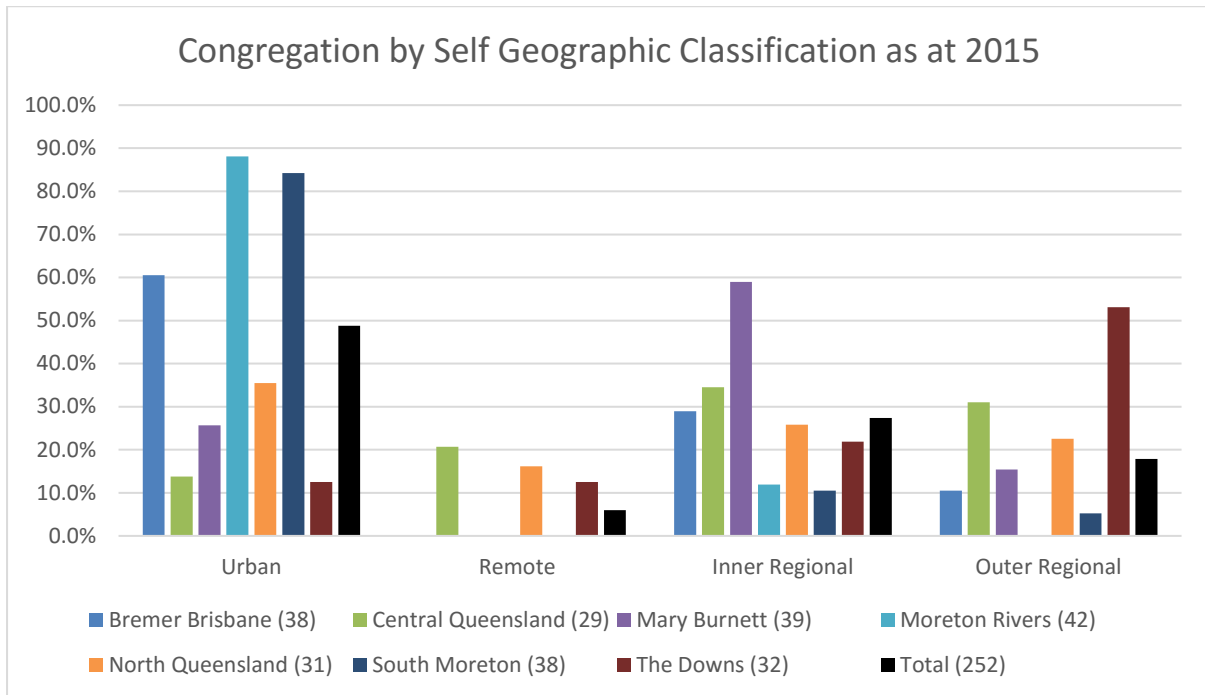
### The data – property utilisation survey

There is one set of relevant data gathered from congregations in 2016 as part of the property evaluation tool. This tool requests congregations to provide attendance figures over a 5 year period. In this tool, congregations also have a nominated geographic status of either urban, inner regional, outer regional and remote. Even though the definitions do not match those established in this report, this self-selective geographic summary, which is graphed below, provides some insight into the proportion of congregations within each Presbytery.

Similarly, attendance data is outlined in a graph below but in summary shows that numeric decline in remote congregations is much lower than other groups, and that urban congregations are declining at the highest rate. It is interesting to note that self-assessed

predictions of the size of congregations in 5 years' time are generally far more positive in all areas than remote, where they remain stable.

Overall these factors indicate that while some presbyteries face higher resource challenges than others, this is spread relatively evenly across urban and rural and remote presbyteries.



## 5: Future Forms

Identify future forms of ministry that are appropriate



No clear individual model has been devised as part of this report. It is clear that each situation involves a range of factors, both quantitative and qualitative that need to be considered in order to formulate the most appropriate strategic and intentional approach. Neither does this report outline a range of models from which to choose. Rather, a series of possible approaches or components of forms of ministry and worship are offered that may be useful for future implementation. An attempt to describe and model different styles of churches in a more concrete manner will form part of the Synod office key change initiatives 2017-2020.

For new models to be successful, they need to be tailored for the different environments and scenarios in individual locations. This is the premise of Ministry in place. Communities, both within and without the church must be willing to engage in the process of planning the most appropriate approach. Arthur Tutin<sup>6</sup> examines similar concepts via the work of Mario Weyers<sup>7</sup> in his book that explores the notion that belonging to a church community comes before believing in Christ.

Research undertaken by the University of Southern Queensland shows that community health and vitality across a range of factors is reflective of an engaged and willing participation by members in their own destination. Leaders placed by the church into these environments must be skilled in gaining community support and participation.

## Kitto Report

The Synod is aware of the need to consider both current health and vitality and future forms of church and in 2016 Carolyn Kitto<sup>8</sup> (Spirited Consulting) was commissioned to undertake a review of the life and mission of Queensland Presbyteries. There are several observations and recommendations particularly relevant to ministry and mission in rural and remote Queensland.

Kitto uses the original work of Sharonne Price<sup>9</sup> to outline the nature and vitality of churches into four quadrants as shown below. She advises that the synod is losing the Quadrant B churches and they are becoming Quadrant A or D. Quadrant C or B churches are not being planted and it is lack of people resources which prevent churches becoming B or C.

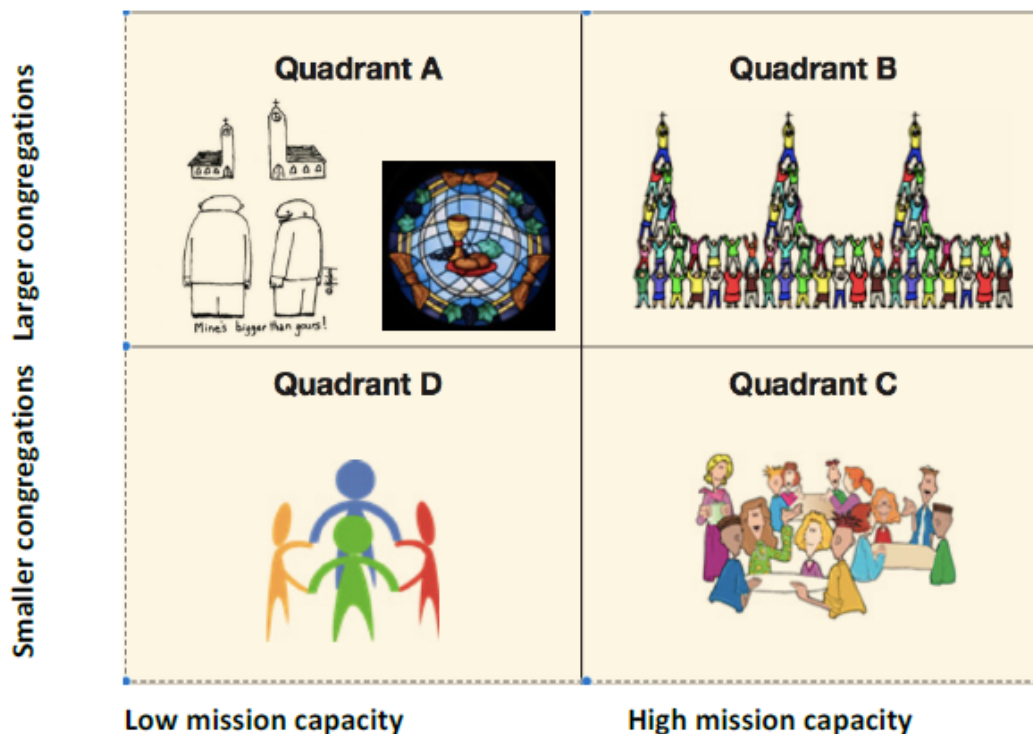
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<sup>6</sup> Tutin, Arthur, Remote Area Ministry Major Report 2017, Presbytery of Central Queensland

<sup>7</sup> Weyers, Mario, "Belonging to the Church before Believing in Christ. A Missionary Ecclesiology in the Making. Understanding the 7 C's of Connecting your Community with your Church." MediaCom Education, Unley, 2016

<sup>8</sup> Kitto, Carolyn, Spirited Consulting, Life & Mission Consultation Queensland Synod Presbyteries, 2016

<sup>9</sup> Price, Sharonne, The Capacity Quadrant Model, Pastoral Relations and Mission Planning, SA Synod, 2016.



In addition, Kitto has proposed an analysis of congregations as first-third, middle-third and third-third in terms of life and vitality, indicating a likely ongoing increase in the proportion of third-third congregations.

<b>First Third Quadrant B or C</b>	<b>Middle Third Mostly Quadrant A, B or C</b>	<b>Third Third More likely Quadrant A or D</b>
A clear agreed mission focus and conversion growth occurring	Rely on the inspiration of the minister/leadership to be moved to mission.	If 2-5 key people or families died or moved away, the church would struggle to be viable
Effective pastoral care in the church and helpful care in the wider community	Pastoral care is often focused on looking after the members.	Leaderships time spent on worship, pastoral care of members and urgent but unimportant problems
Processes for, and a focus on, growing disciples	Majority of lay leadership time is spent in worship or administration	Reluctant to consider new models or collaborate
Strong leadership team of focused on mission and leadership succession	They rely on 30% or more of their income from outside the congregation	Part-time appointment minister's time or cycling vacancies with placements.
Stable and growing generous finances from multiple sources	Their property is well maintained and used as a source of income	Rely on income from outside subsidies or property rental
Well maintained property with a priority of use for church mission purpose	Need help with the compliance	Unable to do compliance on their own

Kitto observes that the church has inherited the locations of most of its church properties. At the time they were established, they were located appropriately, however in many cases the location of the centres of communities has shifted. New highway alignments mean once thriving regional centres are now in decline, and mining or industrial downturn means

regional or rural centres can go into rapid decline. In this environment, the church needs to be clear on where it needs expressions of worship, witness and service for the future. During her consultation process, she became aware that there can be differing views between presbyteries and congregations as to future models and structures, resulting in tensions. There is, therefore, value in presbyteries intentionally working to develop common language and understanding around mission and ministry.

The challenge for the church, according to Kitto, is to identify strategy locations for worship, witness and service. She advises the church can no longer afford to treat every congregation (whether rural or urban) with the same priority or strategy when they are seeking placements, using investment and property funds as primary income and wishing to use those funds to support what she describes as a steadily declining model of ministry. She notes for example that a significant number of placements are moving to part-time as a way of managing a declining situation. Kitto expresses the view that while this can sometimes work in the favour of the minister and congregations this approach should not become the norm, nor should such placements be prioritised for filling without other options being considered. While it is important to maintain presence to serve rural community, it is also important to develop a range of models including resourcing strategy, patrol ministry, strategic hubs and partnerships with UCA care agencies

Her report identified that many “third-third” congregations are unable to continue to meet the requirements of a congregation under the regulations and, additionally, use proceeds from property rental as the primary source of funding for the maintenance of a congregation that cannot otherwise support itself. “There are a number of areas in the life and mission of the church where Presbyteries have authority and responsibility to take action and have huge potential to shape the culture of mission and ministry for the future directions of the region” she states. Kitto advises that Presbyteries will need to make what may be difficult decisions about the future of such congregations and explore alternative models. Some processes and strategies Kitto suggested to assist presbyteries to work with congregations in these bands include:

- Offering mission planning resources and workshops for congregational teams
- Resourcing elders and leaders to strengthen spiritual and pastoral oversight
- Identifying and supporting leadership culture, qualities and styles that are proactive in empowering the future
- Releasing mission and services funds into strategic places
- Streamlining of compliance practices, including delegation of responsibilities from Presbytery to Synod should be considered in order to preserve presbytery capacity for focussing on future oriented work

## Possible structural models

Throughout 2016 and 2017, Central Queensland Presbytery has undertaken a Remote Area Ministry (RAM) project. The project has consisted of a range of research and prototyping initiatives led by Rev Arthur Tutin. Some of the content from this report has been included within various sections of this report where it adds to the discussion. In his draft report Tutin summarises the following church structure models, many of which are already in existence across the Synod:

- Parish minister/pastor model with one person pastoring a single congregation. This person may be lay or ordained, and may work full-time or part time.
- Multi-centre, linked congregations with several congregations served by one minister.
- Cluster congregations in which a team, perhaps of combined ordained and local lay people, cooperate in leadership.
- Ecumenical cooperation incorporates various arrangements such as sharing buildings and/or ministry with congregations of other denominations.

- Community ministry in which a specialist person is employed by a congregation/parish to work in ministry in the community, such as a youth worker.
- Intentional short-term ministry for an interim period, or a short block of time to meet special needs or to serve during a holiday period.
- Lay ministry team involving local lay people chosen by the local community to take responsibility for leadership. These people may be resourced from a larger church or by a regional minister.
- Faith community or home group church where a group of believers meet to worship, perhaps informally in a home or a café.
- Patrol minister, where a person travels large distances connecting with people in remote communities or on properties
- Partnerships involving both trained and lay members from one congregation contributing to a smaller congregation to offer mutual support and encouragement which may take the form of preaching, visiting, music, prayer, financial support or joint workshops.

While the Remote Area Ministry Report is written from and for a Central Queensland context, parts of the report offer great insight to rural and remote ministry contexts beyond Central Queensland. Making the report, and the learning and opportunity captured in it more widely available may prove beneficial.

## Infrastructure

### Digital support models

Ongoing developments in digital communication tools and technology, and the steadily improving availability of such tools for regional and remote Australia dictates that significant consideration be given to the use of digital support for remote and rural ministry. There are several first steps that could be considered:

- Streaming worship to and from rural and remote congregations: Live streaming of worship in a two-way sense (rather than a simple one-way broadcast) could be trialled between congregations. This particularly enables congregations with limited capacity to independently lead their own worship services to continue with high quality worship, and to actively participate in the leadership of such worship services as may be appropriate. The challenge remains to ensure that worship, including preaching, responds to the particularity of each context and community, rather than simply being “city” worship broadcast to “the bush”
- Training for lay leadership: Rather than having to travel to regional centres, or to Brisbane, technology now allows for the conduct of training and development activities for lay leaders in rural and remote locations. The Mission Shaped Ministry course, for example, could be streamed for rural and remote participation, as could lay preacher courses offered by Trinity College Queensland, or Moreton Rivers Presbytery’s Learning for Living initiative
- Training for ministry candidates: Ministry candidates from rural and remote locations may be able to access some of their theological training utilising digital communications models, rather than having to relocate to Brisbane on a full-time basis. Such “in-situ” training assists local communities through keeping key leaders in place while training is undertaken
- Digital Youth Discipleship: The Synod’s Digital Youth Discipleship project is seeking to model the development of on-line communities of discipleship practice for young people. This is particularly important for congregations where there are only a small number of young people, and with limited capacity to network with other young people owing to distance and travel limitations. The project (known as “Breadfishtoo”) aims to link real-world discipleship practice with on-line community and encouragement. Learning from this youth-oriented project may offer insights for wider digital discipleship practice.

## **Beyond the building - reconsidering the use of church resources**

Maintaining church buildings, particularly those that are rarely used, absorbs resources that could be directed to God's work in many other ways. A process of strategically considering existing resources alongside existing and future needs can guide the development of a sustainable long-term plan. Such a process is being considered as part of the Synod priorities 2017-2020.

Presbyteries and congregations in particular can be asked to consider how buildings or the land they occupy be more effectively used by the community? Some ideas include:

- identifying one or more alternative location(s) for worship,
- maintaining a building in partnership with other denominations, or other faiths,
- selling property/fittings and reinvesting into community infrastructure,
- demolishing and using materials to rebuild a broader community-use facility,
- combining with other Uniting Church service agencies to construct or offer broader services such as nursing or aged care,
- re-purpose land into a community garden or park...

## **Training for ministry in a rural or remote setting**

Ministerial Agents are a critical component of a discipleship driven congregation but a new model may be needed for ministry placements within rural and remote settings. Ministerial agents need to be trained for the specific needs of rural and remote placements, many of which will involve multiple smaller congregations in the surrounding area and a requirement to resource via teaching, training, encouraging and supervising a number of lay leaders. A clear picture of whether this is a specialist form of ministry must be formulated. Careful reflection as to the type of personality best equipped to minister in rural and remote areas, the core competencies required for such ministry and how to develop and deliver appropriate training need to be prioritised. Such core competencies may include the capacity to read and understand culture and community which is a heavy focus of the *Fundamentals of Transitional Ministry* training course, training and equipping others, team development, resilience in isolated settings, change management approaches and leadership in resource-poor contexts

There are bigger issues too around the identification and preparation of suitable candidates who have displayed suitable heart or temperament for rural and remote work or sense a particular call to that context. This might include not only ordained ministers, but those working in agencies or as lay leaders. Consideration for the special nature of rural and remote ministry might be included in period of discernment processes and resources, theological training, field placements, third ministry phase support and a rural and remote stream of continuing education.

Leadership development is a current synod priority. Progress has been made with the development of a leadership framework and this framework, along with the appropriateness of involving Trinity College will be explored further as part of the ongoing Synod Office strategic mission workload. Consideration will also be given to the identification or development of resources that will assist in the growth of skills in inspirational, agile and transitional leadership as well as managing change and conflict — skills useful in rural and remote contexts as well as urban and regionally-based leadership.

## Partnerships

### Regional gatherings

While small communities can worship and witness in small and varied venues, there are some aspects of worship such as singing and preaching that are much better when undertaken in a larger group. People in rural and remote areas currently travel for medical, business, sport and other recreational purposes and could also do so for special church and worship gatherings. A model that supports small local faith community gatherings but offers also larger worship offerings in a central or regional centre all supported by digital opportunities could help in growing faith communities. This model could also include the use of digital technology streaming services into smaller venues and various options in this regard are outlined other sections of the report.

### Broader support networks

Rebuilding the presence of ministry agents in rural and remote areas will likely require some degree of cross-denominational collaboration or financial support as many remote congregations cannot support a full-time minister and travel times in some contexts preclude multiple congregation coverage. Ministers placed in remote areas may contribute to wider synod or presbytery work including via digital means. The UNSW/ACT Synod has, for example, committed to regenerate rural and remote ministry via the Saltbush Project which will create 10 Synod placements consisting of Remote Chaplains, patrol Ministers and resourcing Ministers along with a support structure to work across three existing presbyteries and the UAICC Congress. This involves a significant realignment of the existing Rural Ministry Unit and the appointment of a new Director to commence in July 2017 may provide further insight into another potential model to consider. Part of this work will be supported by contributions from urban churches.

Broader support networks need to address particular issues faced by ministry agents in rural and remote settings. These include the obvious issues of distance and subsequent lack of being able to just have a cuppa with colleagues. Related to this, but almost the reverse, is the difficulty of getting away from the local community on a day off, as ministers are not able to become anonymous by going to the next suburb as in a city setting. Just as the minister can't "get away" in the local community, it also has to be recognised that small rural communities do not provide a choice of worship experiences; inevitable conflicts as part of change processes are intensified in small communities, where the congregation has to include all members and is deeply embedded and highly visible in the local community. Further issues include the greater length of time that it takes to build trust in small rural communities, especially if the minister is perceived to be a "blow-in", only there for a short period of time. Finally, the working group identified the lack of suitably qualified and skilled supervisors for ministers as a key challenge in rural and remote settings.

### A Spirit of generosity

Congregations, particularly those who are well resourced, should be encouraged to continue to identify ways in which they can use their own resources to support those congregations that are smaller and struggling to maintain their mission. This may include joining in partnership with a congregation or identifying people who may participate in prayers, readings, music, or preaching within worship. Congregations could consider releasing their minister in placement for one weekend per year to support rural or remote congregations. Presbyteries can take an active role in co-ordinating the visits of ministers to other congregations and establishing a mechanism of offering financial support to offset costs for those involved.

### Collaboration across all Uniting Church activities

One Church is a Synod 2017-2022 key change initiative and is articulated as the community seeing one unified Christ-centred identity for the whole church. As part of this key change initiative, each church activity is encouraged to proactively explore opportunities for whole of church collaboration and equipped to form and maintain partnerships with other entities of the UCA. This includes a strategy to provide opportunities for key Uniting Church leaders in geographical locations to meet, share stories and build connections. As part of this ongoing body of work, particular emphasis will be placed on building models for cross-church involvement in rural and remote areas.

### **Ecumenical partnerships**

As noted earlier, ecumenical partnerships remains one of the clearest opportunities in rural and remote communities. Regardless of the difficulties that have been experienced in many cases, there are also some examples where a community church has been successful. Uniting Church communities may need to look outside some of the more traditional ecumenical partners of the past. Difficulties may still be experienced at both the local and hierarchical levels but the broader the partnerships explored the greater chance that opportunities will be recognised. Ongoing conversations should also be pursued at the regional and state levels with both presbyteries and synod taking a proactive role in pursuing memorandums of understanding. Unsuccessful opportunities within communities may need to be re-visited over time as the health of individual congregations can impact on their willingness to engage. If agreement cannot be achieved at the grass roots level, then progress is likely to stall. However, it may be that communities who have expressed a desire to unite and work together as one in their faith, will need at times to take a firm but respectful ecclesiastical position for the strength of their community.

### **Change theory and opportunity cost**

There is an inherent risk in implementing change, particularly for those congregations with fixed ideas regarding worship models or long established practices. Change in such circumstances requires a long term commitment to gain trust, together with carefully planned and incremental changes.

While there clearly is a need to provide an ongoing service to those who have been long term committed members of the church, at the same time there is risk that other community members looking to the church for a different model may be disenfranchised. Opportunities to bring others to faith might be lost, and this is the opportunity cost of no or slow change.

It may be that the 'mixed-economy' approach championed in the Church of England's "Mission Shaped Church" report of 2004 holds value for us here. Considering the possibility of operating in a mixed economy that includes both traditional Sunday worship and other fresh activities and community engagement that will appeal to a broader range of individuals may bear fruit in rural and remote contexts as in urban areas. Growing something new in parallel may result in a more organic change process rather than necessarily being seen as in competition with the traditional approach. The resources involved in leaders developing new activities over the broader area of a rural or remote community is an issue to be carefully and prayerfully considered. This may be managed by additional resources being made for innovative practices as per Kitto's model or it may result eventually in the need to prioritise. Success in these activities has the potential over the long term to translate into additional resources for ongoing sustainability. It may take time for community activities to translate into church attendance and faith but if the activities are valued by the community then the church is in turn contributing to a social structure that is struggling.

If we recognise that change to existing worship arrangements is something to which we must commit time and effort in order to gain trust and acceptance then we might equally recognise that similar time and effort is justified in growing the health, vitality and faith of a community in need.

### Successful and proven models

There are many examples of initiatives that have been trialled and implemented across both the Queensland and other synods. The development of a repository of such models and approaches would assist congregations and leaders access material that would assist in their own planning processes.

## 6: Ongoing Resourcing

Make recommendation(s) to SSC to secure long term, sustainable resourcing of Rural and Remote Ministry in this Synod

It has been suggested that there is a need to bring the needs of rural and remote ministry to the forefront of Synod thinking and action. This report outlines a number of steps that are involved in progressing considered thinking in the space of rural and remote ministry. Since the recommendations of the 32nd Synod, the Synod Standing Committee has made considerable advancements in outlining a body of strategic priorities and key change initiatives for 2017-20. A number of these will coincide with the need to consider the future form of ministry in rural and remote areas.

Therefore, it is not appropriate at this time to formulate separate recommendations regarding long term sustainable resourcing for rural and remote ministries but rather that this report and a number of specific matters be referred or segued into the ongoing strategic work plan, including further consideration of the purpose and function of the Mission Development Fund.

## Proposals to the 33rd Synod

It is proposed that the Synod:

- i. Recommends the Synod office develop descriptions and models for different styles of churches within its 2017-2020 Key Change Initiatives projects.
- ii. Recommends the Synod office, within its 2017-2020 Key Change Initiatives projects, ensures the development of resources to assist presbyteries to identify strategic locations for ongoing and future development and resourcing.
- iii. Recommends the Synod office devise methods that enable churches to measure the health and vitality of their worship locations as part of its Strategic Locations Key Change Initiative project.
- iv. Recommends the presbyteries include plans and goals for rural and remote ministry in their Strategic Locations and One Church Key Change Initiatives.
- v. Recommends the Board for Christian Formation (BCF) will continue to oversee the development and delivery of specific models for the development of intentional ministry in rural and remote locations.
- vi. Requests the Central Queensland Presbytery develop, by the end of the year, a version of the Remote Area Ministry Project Interim Report that communicates general learning and outcomes in a manner useful for other presbyteries throughout the Synod.



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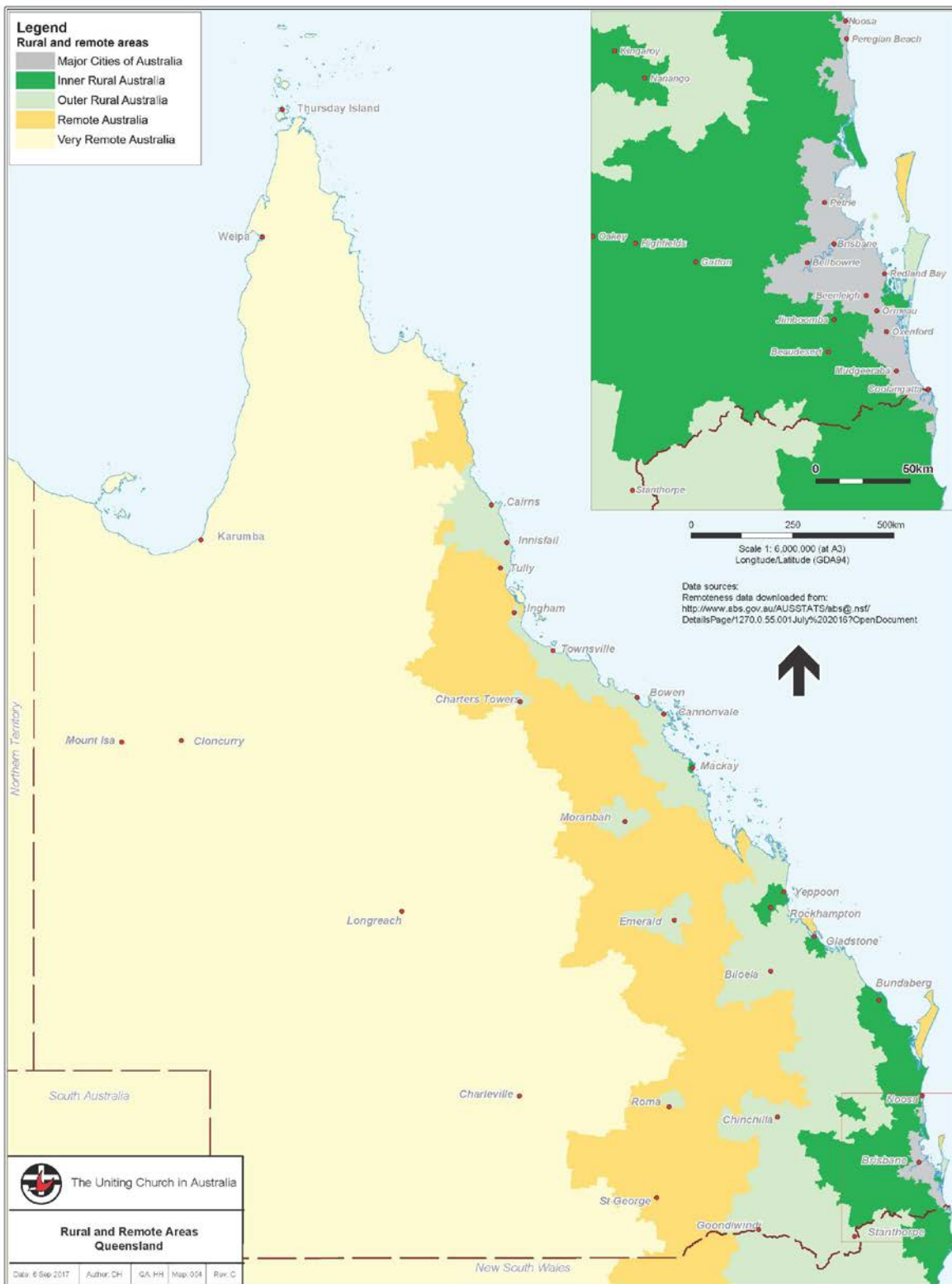
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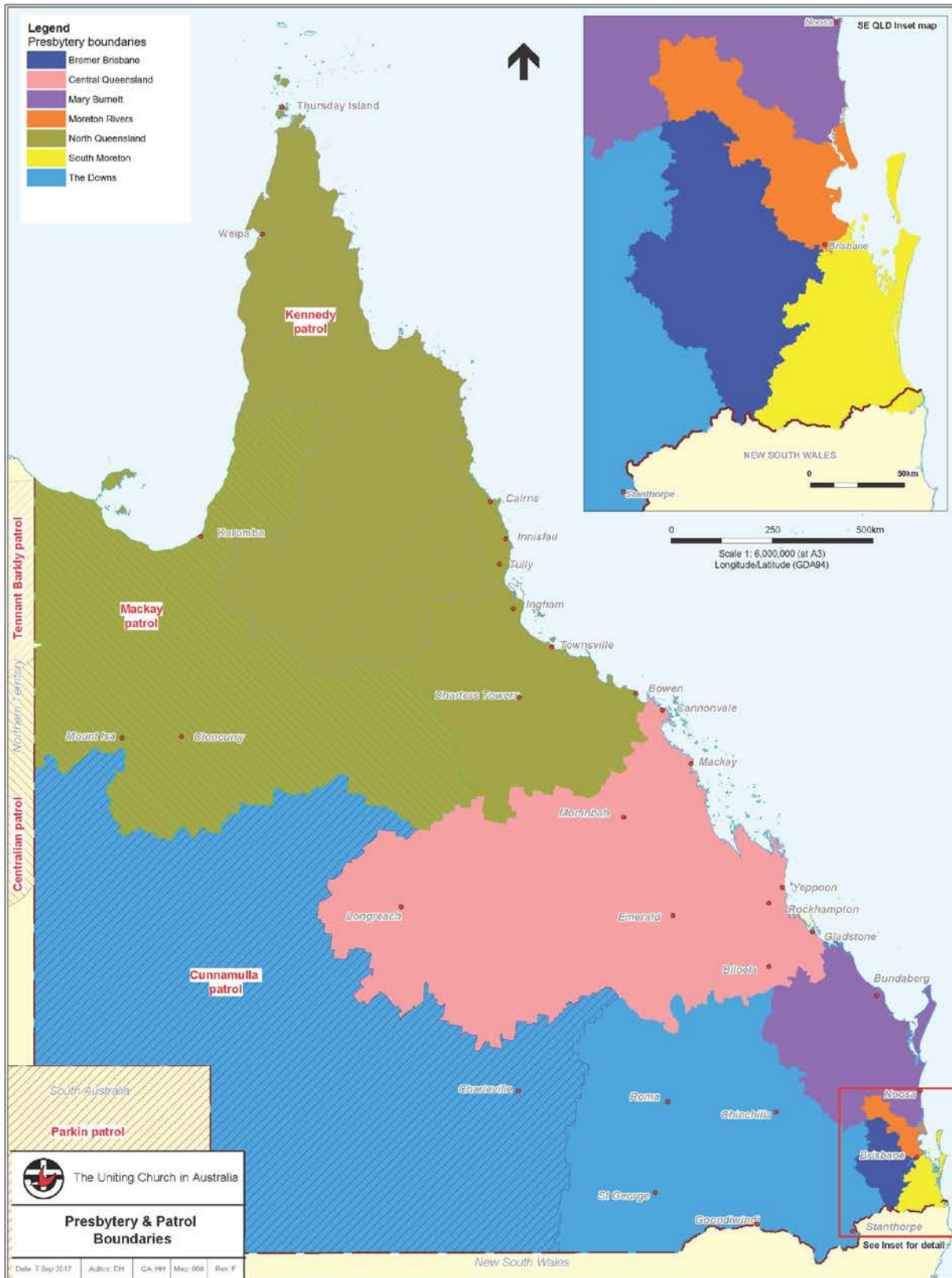
Podcast #realunitingchurch exploring the relationship between UCA and rural and remote Australia

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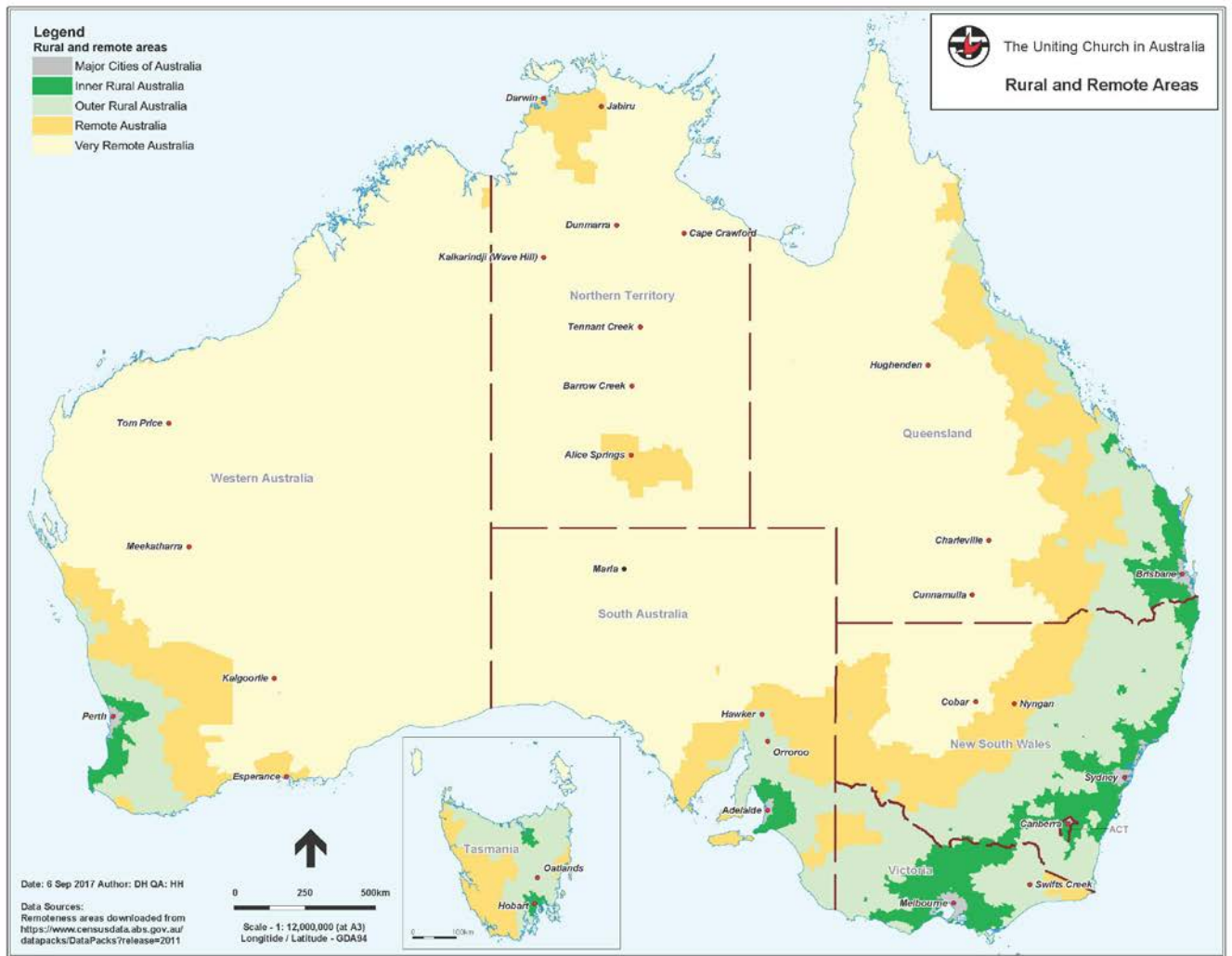
APPENDIX 1: QUEENSLAND MAP INDICATING RURAL AND REMOTE AREAS



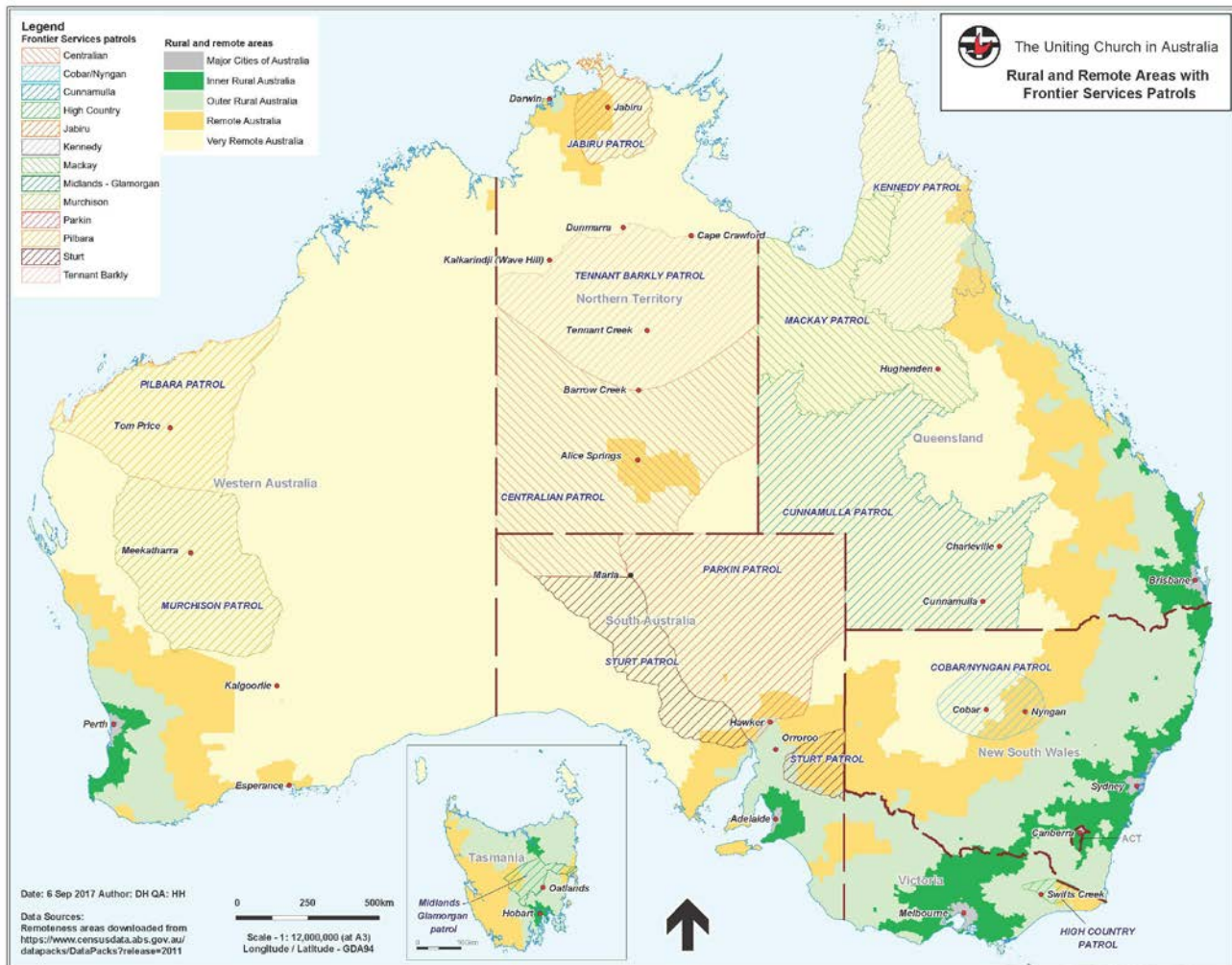
APPENDIX 2: QUEENSLAND RURAL AND REMOTE AREAS WITH PRESBYTERY & PATROL BOUNDARIES



APPENDIX 3: NATIONAL MAP INDICATING RURAL AND REMOTE AREAS



APPENDIX 2: NATIONAL RURAL AND REMOTE AREAS WITH PATROL BOUNDARIES



Contact for report questions:

Name: Helen Harris  
 Position: Program Management Office, Strategic Mission  
 Email: [Helen.Harris@ucaql.com.au](mailto:Helen.Harris@ucaql.com.au) Phone: (07)3377 9701



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## Report from Synod Standing Committee

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### Context

The Synod Standing Committee (SSC) acts on behalf of the Synod between ordinary meetings of the Synod. In exercising its powers and fulfilling its responsibilities, the SSC has regard to the following guiding principles:

- (a) focussing on the strategic and policy issues of the church
- (b) engaging in competence-building activities for its members
- (c) efficiency and timeliness in approvals and decision-making.

During this Synod term, the SSC has undertaken considerable work including:

1. Identifying significant pieces of strategic work from the Synod-wide level to give substance to the *Together on the Way* process and Priority Directions of the church.
2. Contributed to governance structure discussions and endorsed a way forward, including approving changes to the By-laws and recommending structural changes with respect to the Synod's governance structure.
3. Received reports on the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, including redress, civil litigation and principles of payment matters.
4. Approved reviews to the Safe Ministry Framework and the Interim Redress Scheme.
5. Commissioned a Shalom Christian College Renewal Strategy.
6. Approved the Leadership Development Framework and received presentations from participants in the Leadership Development Program.
7. Approved a new Treasury Policy.
8. Approved a Stewardship Fee agreement with UnitingCare Queensland.

## Priority Directions

A key focus of the SSC since the 32nd Synod has been on developing measurable strategies to give effect to the *Together on the Way* process and the Priority Directions framework of the Synod. In August 2016 the SSC held a workshop session with the Presbytery Synod Interface (PSI) group and from this session some major issues were identified.

1. *We needed to be clear on our common identity.*

As we worked through what this meant to us, we gathered some statements together that assisted us in our discernment. We understood that in all things Christ is our foundation. As a church we said we were:

- Australian-formed and had formally acknowledged and repented of our behaviour to Indigenous people
- present in an extraordinary number of communities
- seeking to be open and inclusive
- using a shared process for decision-making
- recognising the ministry gifts of all people
- seeking to act ecumenically.

2. *We committed to invest in leadership development.*

Of the priority directions this a clear area in which the Synod can add significant value. The leadership framework and leadership programs endorsed by the SSC are noted elsewhere in this report.

3. *We needed to understand how to manage change in our complex church environment.*

While change can be disruptive, we committed to act respectfully in our approaches to change.

4. *We needed to commit to identifying the best use of resources available to the church.*






The strategic priorities and some measurable initiatives will guide decisions around the best use of the resources available to the Synod.

5. We acknowledged that we needed to build strategies that were future-focussed.

In collaboration with the presbyteries we identified four key change initiatives which provide some foundational work for the future. These are measurable commitments which will guide the Synod Standing Committee’s decision-making around the Priority Directions over the next three years:

1. Strategic locations for intentional churches (including church planting)  
*We will ensure that right forms of church in each geographic, demographic and virtual context are kingdom-focussed and steadily improving in health and vitality.*
2. Multicultural church  
*We will be confident that we invite, nurture and enable multi and cross cultural communities and leaders to full participation across the whole church.*
3. Effective First Peoples engagement  
*We will work together until First Peoples feel fully engaged across the whole church.*
4. One church  
*The community will see one unified Christ-centred identity for the whole church.*

Work is underway within the Synod office to further resource and develop these initiatives. The following matrix illustrates what work is being done in the areas and also reveals gaps for further work.

Key Change Initiatives → Priority Directions ↓	Strategic locations for intentional church communities	Development of a multicultural church	Whole of church first peoples engagement	One church
 Christ-centered at prayer, and listening	Rural and remote task group			
 Discipleship	Youth and digital discipleship			
 Leadership	Leadership Development Framework	Leadership Development Framework	Leadership Development Framework	Leadership Development Framework
		Next Gen Arise Diversity task group		Governance Review including membership on boards and committees
 Connecting with communities	Framework for community structures (village, regional and resourcing)	CALD link with communities	Rural and remote task group	
 Youth, Children and families	Youth and digital discipleship		Shalom transition	



# Report

The membership of this Synod Standing Committee consisted of 10 elected members from the 32nd Synod and eight ex officio members including:

1. Moderator
2. Ex Moderator
3. General Secretary
4. Chairperson of the Finance Investment and Property (FIP) Board
5. Chairperson of the UnitingCare (UCQ) Board
6. Chairperson of the Board for Christian Formation (BCF)
7. Chairperson of the Governance Nomination and Remuneration Committee (GNRC)
8. Nominee from United Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Congress (UAICC).

Lay members elected at the 32nd Synod were:

1. Neil Ballment
2. Geoff Batkin
3. David Busch
4. John Fifita
5. Dr Marilyn Healy
6. John Lister.

Ministerial members elected at the 32nd Synod were:

1. Rev Linda Hamill
2. Rev David Mackay-Rankin
3. Rev John Cox
4. Rev Lu Senituli.

In addition, the associate General Secretary, Executive Director – Strategic Resources and the Chief Executive Officer of UnitingCare Queensland were standing participants.

During the course of this Synod term, Andrew McBryde resigned as chairperson and member of the GNRC and the resultant vacancy was filled by John Lister in accordance with the By-laws. As Mr Lister was an elected lay member to the SSC, the resultant vacancy on the SSC was filled by Louisa Yu in accordance with the By-laws.

The committee wishes to thank Andrew for his valued contribution to the SSC during his time as a member.

The SSC also considered the gender diversity imbalance in membership and following the work of the Diversity Task Group, it was recommended that three persons be invited to attend meetings of the SSC as associated persons (non-voting) to immediately address the gender diversity imbalance. From the 6 April 2017 SSC meeting, Rev Faye Talatonu, Rev Linda Hanson and Rev Catherine Solomon have been standing participants to the SSC meetings. A mentor was assigned to each of these participants to aid in their growth and leadership whilst participating on the SSC.

Work is continuing on a change to the process of appointing members to the Synod Standing Committee to facilitate a longer term and staggered membership on the committee, however we are awaiting the outcome of broader Assembly considerations on this topic before progressing further as a Synod. We are also awaiting the outcome of a presidential ruling

regarding the term of the moderator before progressing further work on a longer term for the Queensland moderator.

**Attachment A** contains a list of SSC meeting attendance.

**Attachment B** contains an update on the general proposals from the 32nd Synod.

**Attachment C** contains the decision register for the SSC for this Synod term.

## Challenges/risks as we progress

The Synod office has commenced development of a whole-of-church risk management framework. The framework is designed to ensure that all potential strategic, financial, investment, operational, missional and other risks are identified, assessed, monitored, managed and reported.

Some of the key risks identified by the SSC include:

1. *Impact on the activities, response and financial cost to the Synod of historic child sexual abuse in the church.*

The Royal Commission into institutional sexual abuse of children has exposed stories from our past that will have far reaching implications for our future. The Synod is committed to doing all that it can to provide fair, consistent and compassionate redress for people who were sexually abused as children in our care.

To this end the SSC endorsed and has actively monitored the operations of the Synod's interim redress scheme: [ucaqld.com.au/interim-redress](http://ucaqld.com.au/interim-redress) and is kept apprised of the number and nature of civil claims that are being made against the church.

The Safe Ministry with Children approach is the endorsed response and there is an expectation that all areas of the church will have appropriate training and oversight in this area. The SSC is kept apprised of Blue Card compliance data and the reported audit findings of the Safe Ministry framework.

2. *Changing environment in the aged and community care and disability sectors and the resultant impacts on our service arms.*

The SSC received regular reports from UCQ and WMQ and is aware of the seismic shifts in these community sectors. The impact on the Synod of the challenges to these sectors cannot be underestimated. The presence of church activities across the state is tied to our communities. The changes that are required to continue to deliver services are decisions that are not made lightly.

3. *Changing funding sources from the traditional model of congregational giving and the ability to support the activities of the Synod.*

The costs of Synod-wide operations have not been fully supported by congregational or presbytery giving for some time. Instead Synod activities rely primarily on our earnings from treasury and grants from our service streams. The SSC is acutely aware of the need to reimagine sources of income for the church and build appropriate models of resourcing a future-focussed church.

4. *Our current governance structure, including the nature of our boards, committees and commissions and the question about whether our current governance systems are fit for the future.*

A review of our governance structure and the number and nature of committees, commissions and boards reveals a complex structure requiring significant people

resources. The number of appointments required across all these structures, including school boards, requires an ongoing and intensive recruitment process. A review commissioned by the SSC has revealed some approaches to try to clarify and simplify some activities. These are the subject of governance proposals being brought to this Synod for discussion.

5. *The issues arising out of our schools and residential colleges including: levels of school debt, governance responsibility and service delivery.*

The Queensland Synod is involved in a number of schools and residential colleges. While the work of those who have facilitated real change in these areas is honoured, it is time for us to consider whether the way we support and resource our schools is the best way for the future. Some analytical work is already occurring in relation to Shalom Christian College, but a broader strategic framework is also required and in development.

## Proposals to the 33rd Synod

1. To seek a change to the Synod By-laws with respect to a new governance structure.

It is proposed that the 33rd Synod receive this report.

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### Contact for report questions:

Name: Rev Heather den Houting  
Position: General Secretary  
Email: [heatherdenhouting@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:heatherdenhouting@ucaqld.com.au) Phone: 07 3377 9777

# Attachment A

## Synod Standing Committee member meeting attendance

The Synod Standing Committee met 16 times during this Synod term. The numbers of meetings held during this Synod term and the numbers of meetings attended by each member are outlined below. Note that the attendance numbers below are based on 14 meetings and exclude the 7 September 2017 and 5 October 2017 meetings, as this report was distributed prior to those meetings being held.

Member	Originating appointment capacity	Meetings eligible to attend	Fully attended	Partially attended	Not attended
Rev David Baker	Moderator appointed	14	13	0	1
Rev Kaye Ronalds	Elected ex officio (Ex-Moderator)	14	12	0	2
Rev Heather den Houting	SSC appointed ex officio (General Secretary)	14	13	0	1
Craig Barke	Ex officio (UCQ Board chairperson)	14	10	2	2
Ralph Collins	Elected ex officio (FIPB chairperson)	14	12	0	2
Rev Dennis Corowa	Ex officio (Congress nominee)	14	12	0	2
Rev Peter Lockhart	Elected ex officio (BCF chairperson) <sup>1</sup>	8	7	0	1
Rev Stuart Cameron	SSC appointed ex officio (BCF chairperson) <sup>2</sup>	5			
Andrew McBryde	Elected ex officio (GNRC chairperson) <sup>3</sup>	9	6	0	3
John Lister	Elected – ministerial <sup>4</sup> SSC appointed ex officio (GNRC chairperson) <sup>5</sup>	14	13	0	1
Neil Ballment	Elected – lay	14	10	0	4
Geoff Batkin	Elected – lay	14	13	0	1
David Busch	Elected – lay	14	14	0	0
Rev John Cox	Elected – ministerial	14	9	1	4
John Fifita	Elected – lay	14	13	0	1
Rev Linda Hamill	Elected – ministerial	14	11	0	3
Dr Marilyn Healy	Elected – lay	14	13	0	1
Rev Dr David Mackay-Rankin	Elected – ministerial	14	13	0	1
Rev Lu Senituli	Elected – ministerial	14	12	0	2
Louisa Yu	Elected – lay <sup>6</sup>	4	4	0	0

<sup>1</sup> Resigned effective 24 February 2017

<sup>2</sup> Appointed effective 3 March 2017

<sup>3</sup> Resigned effective 2 March 2017

<sup>4</sup> Elected member until 2 March 2017

<sup>5</sup> Appointed effective 3 March 2017

<sup>6</sup> Appointed effective 7 April 2017

# Attachment B

## Synod Standing Committee general proposals

An update on the 32nd Synod general proposals progress is outlined below:

RES. #	RESOLUTION	ACTION
16.18	<p>It was <b>RESOLVED by Consensus</b> that the Synod –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Authorises the Moderator to convey a greeting to the State and Federal Governments.</li> <li>(b) Approves that the following matters considered by the Synod be incorporated into the greeting to the appropriate government:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Commend both the Queensland and Federal Governments for their actions on reducing and responding to domestic violence.</li> <li>(ii) Urge the Queensland and Federal Governments to work together and with churches and institutions to implement a national approach to redress for victims of child sexual abuse in institutions.</li> <li>(iii) Express concern about the sustainability of, and equal access to, services in rural and remote Australia.</li> <li>(iv) Express our deep concern about cuts of \$1.2bn in the last federal budget from care for the oldest, most frail and invisible.</li> <li>(v) Urge the Queensland and Federal Governments to make reduction of homelessness a state and national priority.</li> <li>(vi) Express grave concern about the number of children in care, especially the high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and urge governments to invest more in early intervention and safe reunification of children with their families.</li> <li>(vii) Urging the Queensland and Federal Governments with the community leaders of Cape York to find ways forward for their communities.</li> <li>(viii) Express our deep concern about the treatment of asylum seekers and refugees and urge the government to adopt policies that are welcoming of asylum seekers and refugees.</li> <li>(ix) Commends the work of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and welcomes any recommendations that will lead to the greater safety of children in the future.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>COMPLETED</b></p> <p>Letter sent from the Moderator to the Office of the Premier on 29 June 2016.</p>

RES. #	RESOLUTION	ACTION
16.26	<p>It was <b>RESOLVED by Consensus</b> that the Synod Standing Committee:</p> <p>(a) Continues to consider the range of regulatory options that would allow sitting moderators in the Queensland Synod to be nominated for a second consecutive term of office, up to a maximum of six years.</p> <p>(b) Notes that without limiting these options, requests the Assembly Standing Committee act under the authority granted by Regulation 3.10.1 and grant to the Synod of Queensland an exemption to the operation of Regulations 3.6.3.1(c) and 3.6.3.1(d) sufficient to enable an incumbent moderator of Queensland to be nominated for one continuous term of three years and that this exemption remain valid until otherwise requested by the Queensland Synod.</p> <p>(c) Bring the result of these considerations and the results of the request to the Assembly Standing Committee back to the 33rd Queensland Synod.</p>	<p>This item was discussed at a national general secretaries and moderators meeting and a moderator's term task group was established.</p> <p>Legal advice was obtained regarding what appears to be a conflict between the Act and the Regulations in regard to moderatorial terms. We will be seeking a presidential ruling on this issue.</p>
16.34	<p>It was <b>RESOLVED by Agreement</b> that the Synod –</p> <p>(a) Request the Synod Standing Committee to review the current processes involved in recruitment, nomination and appointment to boards, committees and commissions to better reflect the cultural, gender, geographical and age diversity of our church.</p> <p>(b) Request the Governance, Nomination, Remuneration Committee to support the review outlined in resolution 16.33(a), work with a cross section of lay and ordained people reflecting this diversity with a view to developing processes, procedures, and policies that are clearer and culturally appropriate to be put into place by the 33rd Synod.</p>	<p>A Diversity Task Group was convened to discuss ways forward generally in terms of the leadership development of people from across the diversity of groups within the church.</p> <p>The Diversity Task Group prepared a report for consideration by the SSC and this paper has been shared with the GNRC.</p> <p>One of the key strategies, to invite potential leaders into structured conversation over dinner, has been launched.</p> <p>The Next Gen Arise project appears to be developing significant momentum and developed strong relationships across the Synod office and Trinity College Queensland.</p> <p>The recruitment of people to the graduate leadership program is being shaped by the desire to ensure there is adequate diversity in the cohorts.</p>
16.45	<p>It was <b>RESOLVED by Consensus</b> that the Synod –</p> <p>(b) Appoints a Rural and Remote Ministry Task Group, under the supervision of the Synod Standing Committee to:</p> <p>(i) Define "rural" and "remote" as it will apply to this ministry setting</p> <p>(ii) Identify the needs and the opportunities in rural and remote locations</p>	<p>A Rural and Remote Ministry Task Group has been convened.</p> <p>The group assessed all prior resources in this space and believed that an innovative approach needed to be taken to the task at hand.</p>

RES. #	RESOLUTION	ACTION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(iii) Review current resourcing for ministry in rural and remote locations</li> <li>(iv) Identify future forms of ministry that are appropriate</li> <li>(v) Provide progress reports to SSC meetings</li> <li>(vi) Make recommendations to the SSC to secure long-term, sustainable resourcing of rural and remote ministry in this Synod.</li> </ul> <p>(b) Requests the Rural and Remote Ministry Task Group to finalise its work by the end of May 2017.</p>	<p>A project officer from the Synod office has progressed this work and is aligning it with the Key Change Initiative work. This work will be shared with the Synod task group.</p>
16.53	<p>It was <b>RESOLVED by Agreement</b> that the Synod requests the Moderator to write to the Queensland State requesting that the government establish continuous and comprehensive real-time monitoring in all areas where CSG operations are taking place within two kilometres of people's homes with appropriate follow up and reporting back to the community by the Department of Health and Department of Environment and Heritage Protection.</p>	<p><b>COMPLETED</b> Letter sent from the Moderator to the Hon Anastacia Palaszczuk on 2 June 2016.</p>
16.54	<p>It was <b>RESOLVED by Consensus</b> that the Synod requests the Moderator to write to the Queensland State Premier requesting that comprehensive baseline studies be conducted prior to the commencement of any new mining development or expansion of existing mining operations.</p>	<p><b>COMPLETED</b> Letter sent from the Moderator to the Hon Anastacia Palaszczuk on 2 June 2016.</p>
16.55	<p>It was <b>RESOLVED by Consensus</b> that the Synod commends the One in Christ Covenant of Intercession and encourages congregations to –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Share in Bible study based on “Intercession” by Lukas Vischer and the accompanying online study guide.</li> <li>(b) Commit to praying regularly and intentionally for other parts of Christ's church in their area, including the use of a photographic prayer wall.</li> <li>(c) Share in a regular exchange of information and points for prayer with congregations of other denominations.</li> <li>(d) Consider a public commitment in the form of a Covenant of Intercession in which all participating denominations would share.</li> <li>(e) Explore ways in which they can foster a sense of fellowship with fellow Christians beyond the Uniting Church.</li> <li>(f) Share their story with the Synod through the Ecumenical Relationships Committee.</li> <li>(g) Receives the “<i>Weaving a New Cloth</i>” document.</li> </ul>	<p>The Moderator is driving this work across the Synod.</p>

RES. #	RESOLUTION	ACTION
16.56	<p>It was <b>RESOLVED by Agreement</b> that the Synod directs the Synod Standing Committee to do all things necessary and convenient to commission a low-cost, searchable, web-accessible database of broad, disaggregated data about the entire population of Queensland congregations, faith communities and presbyteries, accessible by their office bearers (and their delegates). The database should make widely available:</p> <p>(a) Key annual return data lodged by congregations and faith communities (including where no return has been lodged), and</p> <p>(b) Any other key financial, ministry and property information available to the Synod (as determined by Synod Standing Committee).</p> <p>The database may be merged, modified or extended in any way whatsoever by reference to other Australian Synods and the Assembly.</p> <p>The database is not to contain any information that it would be unlawful for the church to disclose to the world at large, for example, personal information for the purposes of the Commonwealth Privacy Act.</p> <p>All confidential information contained in the database will be held in strict confidence and not be disclosed, or cause, or permit the disclosure of the confidential information other than for its intended purpose.</p>	<p><b>COMPLETED</b></p> <p>The open data website is live and can be accessed via the Associate General Secretary who will issue a password for access.</p>
16.57	<p>It was <b>RESOLVED by Consensus</b> that the Synod requests the Synod Standing Committee to develop and implement a mechanism for the publishing and reporting of changes to Synod By-laws or policies that affect congregations and/or presbyteries to the broader Synod community.</p>	<p>This will be done as part of a broader communications strategy and stakeholder management map as part of the Synod office services.</p>
16.67	<p>It was <b>RESOLVED by Consensus</b> that the Synod, as part of its journey of <i>Together on the way, enriching community</i>:</p> <p>(a) Adopts as its priority directions for 2016-2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be Christ-centred, at prayer, and listening</li> <li>• Discipleship</li> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Connecting with communities</li> <li>• Youth, children and families</li> </ul> <p>as the church grows, transitions and innovates.</p> <p>(b) Commends these priorities to the church in Queensland including presbyteries, congregations, agencies, committees, councils and boards.</p> <p>(c) Invites presbyteries and other bodies to consult with the Synod so as to explore ways in which the Synod might support them in the pursuit of these priorities.</p>	<p>The new priority directions have been promulgated throughout the meeting cycle of the Synod as well as featuring in regular communications across the church.</p> <p>Scott Guyatt is taking the lead on this work. This is being managed in parallel with the #realunitingchurch campaign and 33rd Synod preparation work.</p>



RES. #	RESOLUTION	ACTION
	(d) Requests bodies that report to 33rd Synod include in their reports to Synod their progress in addressing each of these priorities. (e) Directs the Synod Standing Committee to resource and evaluate these priorities.	

# Attachment C

## Synod Standing Committee decision register

A register has been maintained of the decisions of the Synod Standing Committee made during this Synod term, which is available upon request. As required by regulation 3.7.4.1(g), the **substantive decisions** of the Synod Standing Committee are outlined below. In addition to these substantive decisions, administrative decisions were made with regard to:

- associating meeting participants
- accepting the report on disclosure of potential conflicts of interests by members
- adopting minutes of the Synod Standing Committee
- receiving the reports of reporting bodies
- noting action item reports
- appointments to Synod boards, committees and councils which are made on the recommendation of the relevant appointing bodies, with input from GNRC where appropriate – note that these appointments have been reported separately in the Synod papers (refer Appendix 2 of the Reports and Proposals)
- other administrative matters.

#	Meeting date	Resolution
16.086	05/05/2016	Subject to amendments as advised by the Governance Secretary, including clarification of the policies application to individuals engaged in the work of the Queensland Synod Support Office (definition to be included), it was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approve the Synod Standing Committee and Synod Support Staff Role Conflict Policy, effective 6 May 2016.
16.088	05/05/2016	Subject to updating the policy for Synod By-law numbers, it was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that, upon the recommendation of the Governance Nomination Remuneration Committee, the Synod Standing Committee approve the Ministry Agent Housing Policy.
16.089	05/05/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that Synod Standing Committee adopt the UnitingCare By-laws as contained in Queensland Synod By-laws Amendment 3 of 2016, to replace the existing By-laws relating to UnitingCare previously identified as Q3.1, effective as at 1 July 2016. Any consequential administrative amendments to the body of the consolidated Queensland Synod By-laws may be made to accommodate the replacement.
16.090	05/05/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that Synod Standing Committee adopt the version of the [UnitingCare Queensland] constitution produced as the terms of the Constitution established under By-law 3.1.1 with an effective date of 1 July 2016.
16.091	05/05/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that Synod Standing Committee authorise the UnitingCare Queensland Board to determine the effective date for: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the application of the activities and assets of the bodies nominated in Constitution clause 1.4 in favour of UnitingCare Queensland; and</li> <li>the revocation of the constitutions of the bodies nominated in Constitution clause 1.3.</li> </ol>
16.092	05/05/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that Synod Standing Committee be advised in writing by the UnitingCare Queensland Board when the determinations outlined in the resolution above are made.
16.093	05/05/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that Synod Standing Committee confirm Ms Anne Cross as the Queensland Synod representative to UnitingCare Australia as the CEO of UnitingCare Queensland.

#	Meeting date	Resolution
16.096	05/05/2016	It was <u>AGREED</u> that an alternative committee induction plan be prepared in the instance that the committee composition does not change significantly.
16.097	05/05/2016	It was <u>AGREED</u> that some of the Leadership Development Program participants be invited to a future committee meeting to gain their insights.
16.098	05/05/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED</u> by <u>Consensus</u> that permission be sought from Assembly for exemption from the Regulations to allow the term of the Queensland Synod Moderator to be two consecutive three-year terms.
16.100	05/05/2016	It was <u>AGREED</u> that the following matters be considered when finalising the Guiding Principles for the Resolution of Claims of Child Sexual Abuse: (a) New principle or preamble commentary which recognises the imbalance of power between the survivor and the church. (b) Separate supporting document or commentary which includes a theological statement.
16.101	05/05/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED</u> by <u>Consensus</u> that the general approach as outlined in the proposed recommendation R2 in the civil litigation paper be endorsed as an interim measure, with revised Guiding Principles for the Resolution of Claims of Child Sexual Abuse to be brought to a future committee meeting.
16.102	05/05/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED</u> by <u>Consensus</u> that the General Secretary inform the committee on a case-by-case basis and before instructing relevant Synod support staff and/or external legal advisors, of using either the statute of limitations or deed of settlement defences.
16.103	05/05/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED</u> by <u>Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approve the Synod-wide policy – Synod Property and Other Delegations policy.
16.104	05/05/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED</u> by <u>Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee endorse the Synod-wide policy – Synod Documents Execution policy.
16.110	04/06/2016	It was <u>AGREED</u> that the FIPB revert to the committee with a 3–4 year historic analysis of operating surpluses and the use of these surpluses.
16.111	04/06/2016	It was <u>AGREED</u> that the General Secretary revert to the committee with a way forward with respect to scenario planning, business modelling and multi-year budgeting.
16.112	04/06/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED</u> by <u>Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approve the 2016/2017 Synod Budget.
16.113	04/06/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED</u> by <u>Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approve the Uniting Church in Australia Queensland Synod Guiding Principles for the Resolution of Claims of Childhood Sexual Abuse.
16.114	04/06/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED</u> by <u>Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee authorise the General Secretary to consider the appropriate defence of any civil litigation claim brought by a survivor of childhood sexual abuse on a claim-by-claim basis. Without limiting the General Secretary’s discretion, the General Secretary should: a. consult appropriate heads of agencies, schools, Synod staff and/or external advisors b. consider the current law and relevant legal defences c. consider the claim against the Uniting Church in Australia Queensland Synod Guiding Principles for the Resolution of Claims of Childhood Sexual Abuse d. consider the best interests of all stakeholders involved in the action, and e. instruct the relevant Synod support staff and/or external legal advisors accordingly.

#	Meeting date	Resolution
16.115	04/06/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee consider the draft redress principles and process and provide any feedback to the General Secretary by the close of business on 24 June 2016.
16.117	04/06/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee suspend By-law Q2.3.4(1) solely to enable Mr Lister to remain as a member of the Governance Nomination Remuneration Committee until his scheduled term end date of the 33rd Synod.
16.125	07/07/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> to endorse the key features of the Future Ministry Model for Trinity College Queensland: Beyond 2017.
16.126	07/07/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee: (a) Note that both Adult Faith Education (AFE) positions will become redundant as at 30 September 2016 and recognises that the current incumbent's placement will thereby be brought to a conclusion. (b) Commends the Director of Education for Ministry to consult with the incumbent to negotiate the process of that conclusion of placement.
16.127	07/07/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee: (a) Note that the 0.5 chaplaincy educator placement at TCQ will become redundant as at 30 September 2016 and recognises that the incumbent's placement will thereby be brought to a conclusion. (b) Commends the Director of Education for Ministry to consult with the incumbent to negotiate the process of that conclusion of placement.
16.128	07/07/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee: (a) Approve the BCF recommendation to make the two Practical Theology faculty positions at TCQ redundant by 31 December 2016. (b) Recognises that two incumbents' placements will thereby be brought to conclusion and commends the Director of Education for Ministry to consult with the incumbents to negotiate the process of those conclusion of placements.
16.129	07/07/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approve the BCF recommendation to create a Dean of Formation and Dispersed Learning placement at TCQ as at 1 January 2017.
16.130	07/07/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approve the BCF recommendation to create a Lecturer in Church History and Society placement at TCQ as at 1 January 2017.
16.131	07/07/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that under By-law Q2.4.1.2(2)(a) the Synod Standing Committee approves the Board of Christian Formation's recommendation that the contract of Dr Jason LeCureux not be renewed beyond December 2016.
16.132	07/07/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee delegates authority to the Director of Education for Ministry to develop a new position description for a Lecturer in Old Testament and Homiletics. That this position be considered an approved placement and be subject to the normal placements process.
16.133	07/07/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approve the Synod-wide Governing Body Remuneration Policy (POL-0007 V1.1).
16.134	07/07/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approve the Synod-wide Governing Body Remuneration Process (PRO-0005 V1.2).
16.136	07/07/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee endorse the Model Principles and Procedures for Implementing Interim Redress.

#	Meeting date	Resolution
16.137	07/07/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee note that the General Secretary will make operational amendments to the Procedures for Implementing Interim Redress upon evaluation and as operationally necessary.
16.138	07/07/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee request the General Secretary to make quarterly reports to them on the operation and capacity of the Procedures for Implementing Redress and the trends arising from the implementation of this scheme, the first report to be delivered December 2016.
16.140	07/07/2016	Discussion ensued regarding the cultural issues at Shalom Christian College and it was <u>AGREED</u> that the Synod Standing Committee's concerns in this area be escalated to the Schools and Residential Colleges Commission.
16.142	07/07/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approve the UnitingCare Queensland Annual Statement of Missional Intent for 2016/17.
16.144	07/07/2016	Subject to the typographical change noted at the meeting, it was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approve the UnitingCare Queensland Conflicts of Interest Policy and Procedure in accordance with section 10.4 of the UnitingCare Queensland Constitution.
16.145	07/07/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee note the appointment of Ms Sue McKean as the board secretary in accordance with section 12.1 of the UnitingCare Queensland Constitution.
16.146	07/07/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee notes that the Service Group Constitutions will be revoked from such date as nominated by the UnitingCare Queensland Board in accordance with section 1.4 of the UnitingCare Queensland Constitution.
16.149	07/07/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the National Cooperation and Assembly Funding paper be received, including the verbal update from the General Secretary.
16.152	07/07/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Uniting Church Queensland Synod Gallery and Historical Archive proposal be noted and the scoping study advanced.
16.157	04/08/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> to accept the report on Disclosure of Potential Conflicts of Interests by Members.
16.159	04/08/2016	The committee discussed the consultation process undertaken prior to a decision to terminate a placement and it was <u>AGREED</u> that the General Secretary investigate practices and seek assistance from other Synods.
16.160	04/08/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that a post-implementation review of the Board for Christian Formation "Future Ministry Model" be undertaken no sooner than in 12 months' time.
16.162	04/08/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee note the Prior Year Financials analysis (2011 – 2015) and accepted this as an accurate summary of the financial history of the Synod office.
16.163	04/08/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the General Secretary arrange a meeting with Messrs Batkin, Collins and Cranna to progress further budgeting and planning.
16.164	04/08/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Moderator formally commend Ms Sue Hutchinson, research officer on the outstanding submission to the Inquiry into the Abortion Law Reform.

#	Meeting date	Resolution
16.170	04/08/2016	<p>It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the following be approved in principle with further information, including costs, to be brought back to the Synod Standing Committee for full and final approval:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Synod construct a test open data area on the Synod website to provide access to non-confidential disaggregated data by officers of congregations, faith communities and presbyteries.</li> <li>2. The data be placed on an unlisted (not indexed) section of the Synod website.</li> <li>3. The area be initially protected with a password for which application will need to be made.</li> <li>4. The data on the test site be made available under the Open Database License and that users be requested to make their research and analysis available to others by providing their work back to the Synod to be made available through the central open data site.</li> <li>5. Initial disaggregated data for the test site be provided from 2013, 2014 and 2015 congregation annual returns (identified by SA2 statistical areas and with congregation names removed).</li> <li>6. The complete dataset from congregation annual returns be made available subject to opinion from Legal and Governance re privacy, security and compliance with the law and opinion from Uniting Communications regarding reputational risk.</li> <li>7. The Synod request Assembly approval to make available disaggregated Queensland data from the 2013 Uniting Church Census.</li> <li>8. In 2017 the Synod make available disaggregated data from the NCLS 2016 survey.</li> <li>9. That the test site be evaluated in September 2017 with recommendations regarding the maintenance, extension or development of the open data site.</li> </ol>
16.171	04/08/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the General Secretary continue to keep a watching brief on WBBC and report back to the committee in February 2017.
16.172	04/08/2016	The committee <u>NOTED</u> the briefing from the General Secretary. It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee accepts the application of Rev Helen Dick to be admitted as a Minister of the Word in the Uniting Church in Australia pursuant to Reg. 2.5.2(d)(i).
16.177	01/09/2016	It was <u>AGREED</u> that a post-implementation review of the Board for Christian Formation "Future Ministry Model" be requested for August 2017.
16.180	01/09/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> to approve a name change from Raymont Lodge to Raymont Residential College.
16.181	01/09/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> to adopt the Vision, Mission and Values from the January 2016 workshop, as outlined within the report.
16.182	01/09/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> to approve the proposed restructure of Raymont Residential College, as depicted in Appendix 2 of the report.
16.186	01/09/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> to receive the report on Shalom Christian College, including the verbal briefing from the General Secretary.

#	Meeting date	Resolution
16.189	01/09/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that, effective 1 September 2016, the Synod Standing Committee approve an amendment to the Queensland Synod By-laws, replacing by-law Q2.7.3 with: Q2.7.3 The membership of the Synod Chaplaincy Commission shall include: (a) Ex officio members – (i) Moderator (ii) General Secretary (iii) Executive Officer Chaplaincy Commission (iv) Chief Executive Officer of UnitingCare or nominee; (b) Members appointed by the SSC – (i) Chairperson (ii) At least six other members chosen for their interest or expertise in the areas of theology, education, mission strategy and innovation, marketing, fundraising and finance.
16.194	06/10/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> to: 1. appoint a UCQ Chair Review Panel (“CRP”) to consider and make recommendations regarding the appointment of Mr Craig Barke for a third term as a UnitingCare Queensland board member and his continuation as chairperson UnitingCare Queensland Board. 2. appoint to the CRP: (a) UCQ Board member (b) Member appointed by GNRC (c) Member appointed by SSC 3. appoint the UCQ Board member as the chairperson of the CRP. 4. adopt the reappointment process as set out in this paper. 5. note that the UCQ nominee to the CRP is Dawson Petie, Deputy Chairperson UnitingCare Queensland Board.
16.195	06/10/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee nominee to the UCQ Chair Review Panel be the Moderator.
16.196	06/10/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that: 1. under By-law Q2.5.1.3(1) Dr Paul Jones be appointed to the approved placement of Lecturer in Old Testament and Homiletics for a five-year term. 2. under By-law Q2.5.1.3(1) Rev Dr Peter Hobson be appointed to the approved placement of Dean of Formation and Dispersed Learning for a five-year term.
16.201	06/10/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that: 1. a review of the functions of all boards, committees and commissions (except UCQ) by the General Secretary, as outlined in this paper be endorsed. 2. agenda item 16.047 regarding the risk and review of WMQ be subsumed into the review of all boards, committees and commissions.
16.202	06/10/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that: 1. a reappointment panel be convened for the reappointment of board members whose terms expire 31 March 2017. 2. the nominees for the ‘Reappointment Panel’ for the 2017 board reappointments, excluding the chairperson, be approved as: (a) Mr Craig Barke (chairperson) (b) Rev David Baker (Moderator) (c) Governance Nomination Remuneration Committee nominee, and (d) UnitingCare Queensland Board member representative – Ms Andrea Staines.

#	Meeting date	Resolution
16.203	06/10/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> to receive the verbal update from the General Secretary regarding the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.
16.204	06/10/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the committee approve unbudgeted expenditure of \$500,000 for the 2016/2017 financial year with respect to Royal Commission expenditure, allocation of such costs to be delegated to the General Secretary.
16.205	06/10/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the November meeting of the Synod Standing Committee consider methods of engagement with Assembly to address resourcing issues to enable the Uniting Church in Australia to engage in conversations in the same gender marriage space, and what the Queensland Synod could do to enable and/or resource such conversations.
16.208	06/10/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that action item 160, with respect to a plan for the Crystal Creek property, be deferred until after the November 2016 Synod Standing Committee meeting.
16.209	06/10/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the proposed 40th anniversary promotional plan be received.
16.210	06/10/2016	It was <u>AGREED</u> that all committee members deliberate upon the presentation from the General Secretary on "A future-focussed church" for input into further discussion to be held at the November 2016 Synod Standing Committee meeting.
16.212	06/10/2016	The committee <u>NOTED</u> the presentations from Rev Linda Hanson, Rev Kath Hobson and Rev David Fender on their journey in the leadership development program.
16.217	03/11/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the nomination of Mr Stephen Robertson as a member of the Governance Nomination Remuneration Committee be withdrawn and Mr McBryde hold further discussions with Mr Robertson regarding the concerns of the Synod Standing Committee with respect to his worship in a Presbyterian church.
16.218	03/11/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> to receive the verbal update from the General Secretary regarding the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.
16.219	03/11/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Third Party Liabilities and Indemnities Policy be noted as the foundation for further work on this policy.
16.221	03/11/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Moderator (chairperson), Mr Andrew McBryde, and Rev Lyn Burden be appointed to the Board for Christian Formation Chair and Board Member Panel to bring recommendations for chairperson and board members for Board for Christian Formation to the Synod Standing Committee.
16.222	03/11/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that Ralph Collins (chairperson), Rev Kaye Ronalds, and Mr Geoff Batkin be appointed to the Probation Review Panel for the General Secretary.
16.224	03/11/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee note the actions of the FIP Board in approving and signing the annual audited statutory financial statements for the Queensland Synod office for the year ended 30 June 2016.
16.225	03/11/2016	Subject to the deletion of approval delegation 4.14a, it was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approve the dollars assigned in the Synod Office Delegations Matrix.
16.233	03/11/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Leadership Development Framework be approved.
16.234	03/11/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the verbal update on aged care funding be received.



#	Meeting date	Resolution
16.239	01/12/2016	It was <u>AGREED</u> that the General Secretary, in consultation with Mr McBryde, present a report on the broader nomination process to Synod boards, committees and commissions, including an agreed affirmation for all nominees.
16.247	01/12/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod office work with the Schools and Residential Colleges Commission to appropriately resource a whole-of-business case analysis on the financial, strategic and missional viability of Shalom Christian College.
16.248	01/12/2016	It was <u>AGREED</u> that the General Secretary revert to the Synod Standing Committee, via flying minute, with a scope of work for the whole-of-business case analysis on the financial, strategic and missional viability of Shalom Christian College, with a working group to assist comprised of Mr Peter Campbell, Rev David Fender, Mr Geoff Batkin and Rev Heather den Houting.
16.249	01/12/2016	It was <u>AGREED</u> that the General Secretary revert to the Synod Standing Committee with financial results of Shalom Christian College for the period 1 January 2016 to date.
16.250	01/12/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod office and the Schools and Residential Colleges Commission work together to seek debt forgiveness from the Block Grant Authority for the contingent liability on the Crystal Creek property.
16.251	01/12/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee adopt the Draft Risk Register for Shalom Christian College (November 2016).
16.252	01/12/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod office – scenario planning, business modelling and multiyear budgeting report be noted.
16.253	01/12/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that a further report on this work be brought to the July 2017 meeting of the Synod Standing Committee.
16.254	01/12/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee note the Implementation of Interim Redress Arrangements – progress update and time frame for initial review.
16.255	01/12/2016	It was <u>NOTED</u> that Heather's professional and spiritual support should be completely funded by the Synod office.
16.256	01/12/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that Rev Heather den Houting be confirmed as the General Secretary following the successful completion of the probation period which expired on 30 November 2016.
16.257	01/12/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that a General Secretary Key Performance Indicator Task Group be formed comprising Rev Linda Hamill, Mr Barke and Mr Lister, to develop KPIs for the General Secretary.
16.259	01/12/2016	It was <u>AGREED</u> that the General Secretary would facilitate a Governance Nomination Remuneration Committee approved policy regarding the termination of a ministry agent in a non-congregational setting.
16.261	01/12/2016	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the annual review of the Safe Ministry with Children Policy be deferred to the February 2017 Committee meeting.
17.001	02/02/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that Rev David Fender be invited to attend meetings of the Synod Standing Committee as a standing associated participant effective from 3 February 2017.
17.005	02/02/2017	The Committee <u>NOTED</u> its electronic decision of 20 December 2016 regarding the UCQ Board Reappointment Panel.  It is <u>RESOLVED by electronic decision</u> that Ms Susan Forrester be appointed as the UnitingCare Queensland Board member representative to the UCQ Board Reappointment Panel, replacing Ms Andrea Staines.

#	Meeting date	Resolution
17.007	02/02/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee withdraw the recognition as a minister of Rev Terry John Ayling effective from 1 March 2017.
17.017	02/02/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee thank Ms Munro for her time, commitment and leadership as a member of the UnitingCare Queensland Board since her appointment 1 February 2010.
17.018	02/02/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approves the scope of the 'Reappointment Panel' as noted for the 2017 board reappointments being expanded to include board member recruitment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr Craig Barke (chairperson)</li> <li>• Rev David Baker (Moderator)</li> <li>• Ms Bronwyn Clarkson (Governance Nomination and Remuneration Committee nominee), and</li> <li>• Ms Susan Forrester (UnitingCare Queensland Board member representative).</li> </ul>
17.020	02/02/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee authorises the 33rd Synod Business Committee to elect from within its membership a convenor of the 33rd Synod Business Committee.
17.021	02/02/2017	Subject to a minor amendment to the final sentence of the nominee affirmation as provided to the Governance Secretary, it was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approve the nominee affirmation for nominees to all Synod boards, committees and commissions, as attached to the report.
17.022	02/02/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the report on Shalom Christian College – NSSAB and Business Case be received.
17.023	02/02/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee notes the outcomes of the first five months of implementation of the interim redress arrangements.
17.024	02/02/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approve the following matters with respect to the Principles and Procedures for Redress: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maximum limit for monetary payment – that a one-limit cap (\$200,000) be approved.</li> <li>2. Negotiation with other agencies – that the provisions requiring negotiation with other agencies (Cooperation between Entities) be removed from the Principles and Procedures.</li> <li>3. Responses to other forms of abuse and neglect – that the response to all forms of abuse and neglect be integrated within the panel assessment process.</li> <li>4. Management of ongoing episodic counselling and other support – that a contract with an external agency to manage ongoing/episodic counselling be negotiated.</li> <li>5. Clarification of scope of direct personal responses – that the dot point 'other creative and flexible support options that may further assist the needs of an individual Applicant' be removed from the Procedures.</li> <li>6. Ongoing governance arrangements – that the General Secretary provide to the next Synod Standing Committee meeting a draft reporting framework identifying performance indicators of compliance and achievement of deliverables against the expectations of the Principles and Procedures.</li> </ol>

#	Meeting date	Resolution
17.025	02/02/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee endorses the formation of a decision-making sub-committee (chaired by the General Secretary) which will have the authority to implement the decisions in the resolution immediately above with respect to the Principles and Procedures for Redress, and also other operational amendments identified through the review process.
17.026	02/02/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee note that the previously approved unbudgeted expenditure of \$500k with respect to Royal Commission expenditure has been used to cover costs in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administering the Interim Redress Scheme</li> <li>• Royal Commission costs – Shalom Christian College</li> <li>• Royal Commission National Task Group.</li> </ul>
17.027	02/02/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approve further unbudgeted expenditure for the 2016/2017 financial year with respect to Royal Commission and related expenditure and the administration of the Interim Redress Scheme, allocation of such expenditure to be delegated to the General Secretary.
17.028	02/02/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the General Secretary report to the Synod Standing Committee every month with a financial summary of costs expended for Royal Commission and related matters and the administration of the Interim Redress Scheme.
17.030	02/02/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee accept the resignation of Rev Kaye Ronalds from the Moderatorial Term Task Group.
17.032	02/02/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee endorse the three key areas the Synod should focus on for diversity improvement on boards, committees and commissions in age, gender and multi cross cultural/ATSI representation.
17.033	02/02/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the annual review of the Safe Ministry with Children Policy be deferred to the March 2017 committee meeting.
17.050	02/03/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee invite the following persons to attend meetings of the Synod Standing Committee from 6 April 2017 to the 33rd Synod, as associated persons in accordance with By-law Q1.2.6(3)(c): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rev Faye Talatonu</li> <li>2. Rev Linda Hanson</li> <li>3. Rev Catherine Solomon.</li> </ol>
17.051	02/03/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approve the Safe Ministry with Children Policy.
17.052	02/03/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the procedures and tools associated with the Safe Ministry with Children Policy may be approved by the General Secretary.
17.055	02/03/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approve the Uniting Church in Australia Queensland Synod becoming an ordinary member of the Queensland Faith Communities Council.

#	Meeting date	Resolution
17.061	06/04/2017	<p>The Committee <u>NOTED</u> its electronic decision of 27 February 2017 regarding the Child Protection Policy Delegation.</p> <p>It is <u>RESOLVED by electronic decision</u> that the reporting obligations for likely, reported or actual sexual abuse (<i>Education [General Provision] Act 2006</i> Sections 366 and 366 A) in relation to each school's child protection policy be delegated to the respective board or council chairpersons of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shalom Christian College</li> <li>• The Lakes College</li> <li>• Scots PGC and</li> <li>• Calvary Christian College.</li> </ul>
17.062	06/04/2017	<p>The Committee <u>NOTED</u> its electronic decision of 8 March 2017 regarding the Committee for Counselling Membership.</p> <p>It is <u>RESOLVED by electronic decision</u> that the following persons be appointed to the Synod Committee for Counselling for a three-year term from 10 March 2017 to 9 March 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rev Gerda Olafsen</li> <li>• Rev Peter Blauw</li> <li>• Rev Lynne Gibson</li> <li>• Rev Douglas Foster.</li> </ul> <p>It is <u>RESOLVED by electronic decision</u> that Rev Gerda Olafsen be appointed as chairperson of the Synod Committee for Counselling for a three-year term from 10 March 2017 to 9 March 2020.</p>
17.076	06/04/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee note the key performance indicators for the General Secretary.
17.077	06/04/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Uniting Church in Australia Assembly funding by the Queensland Synod be approved as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. \$550,000 – year ending 30 June 2018</li> <li>b. \$564,000 – year ending 30 June 2019</li> <li>c. \$578,000 – year ending 30 June 2020.</li> </ul>
17.080	06/04/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee note the Review of Ministry Agent Payment and Benefits paper and approve recommendations 1 to 34 as contained in that paper.
17.081	06/04/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approve the commencement of the Shalom Christian College Renewal Strategy in accordance with the Shalom Christian College Renewal Strategy – Project Scope.
17.084	06/04/2017	The work of all contributors to the Uniting Church in Australia's response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse was commended and it was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that a minute of appreciation be provided to the contributors.
17.086	06/04/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee meeting agenda be amended to include a consent agenda item, grouping into one agenda item routine business, minutes, reports and other non-controversial items not requiring discussion or independent action.
17.100	04/05/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that Synod Standing Committee determine that there will be an institution called Barnabas Council Durack.
17.101	04/05/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approve the Barnabas Council Durack Constitution, subject to a correction to clause 7.1(c)(i), replacing "Executive Director of UnitingCare Community or nominee" with "CEO of UnitingCare Queensland or nominee".

#	Meeting date	Resolution
17.102	04/05/2017	It was <u>NOTED</u> that a memorandum of understanding is being constructed between UnitingCare Queensland and Barnabas Council Durack, with respect to the provision of services to Barnabas House.
17.103	04/05/2017	It was <u>AGREED</u> that the BCF chairperson would report back to the Synod Standing Committee on BCF's strategy in relation to the mix of staffing on the faculty of Trinity College Queensland.
17.104	04/05/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee, on the recommendation of the BCF's Joint Nominating Committee, appoint Dr John Frederick as Lecturer in New Testament.
17.105	04/05/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee reject the application of Rev Chris Wilson to be admitted as a Minister of the Word into the Uniting Church.
17.106	04/05/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee consider the attached Governance Report.
17.107	04/05/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the General Secretary do further work with the report to assess the consultant's recommendations against the strategic priorities of the Synod (coming from the May meeting) with a view to bringing further recommendations to the June Synod Standing Committee.
17.108	04/05/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the "Review of By-laws and Governance Structure of The Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod" be kept confidential until such future time as agreed.
17.117	01/06/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approves the three-stage process regarding the governance structure of the Synod as outlined in the report.
17.118	01/06/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approves the directions contained in the instructing document to give effect to Tranche 1 of the By-law changes, noting that the instructions with respect to the Legal Reference Committee form part of Tranche 2.
17.119	01/06/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approves the development of resolutions and supporting documents with respect to Tranche 2 of the governance structure of the Synod, including the Legal Reference Committee instructions, to be taken as proposals to the 33rd Synod in Session.
17.120	01/06/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approves the development of a consultation paper and process with respect to Tranche 3 of the governance structure of the Synod.
17.121	01/06/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approve the implementation of a financial contribution model between the Synod office and UnitingCare Queensland.
17.122	01/06/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approve the financial contribution model take the form of a stewardship fee paid by UnitingCare Queensland to the Synod office as outlined in Attachment A to the submission.
17.123	01/06/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee note that the Synod will work to implement an appropriate financial contribution model with all other bodies across the life of the Synod.
17.125	01/06/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that in accordance with Regulation 3.3.8(a)(iii)(4) each presbytery of the Queensland Synod shall appoint one minister and one lay member to the 15th Assembly.
17.126	01/06/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the constitution for Emmanuel College would be circulated by flying minute in due course.

#	Meeting date	Resolution
17.128	01/06/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee agree that the dates for the 34th Synod be recommended as 17-22 May 2019.
17.129	01/06/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Shalom Christian College Renewal Strategy – Status Report as at 31 May 2017 be received.
17.130	01/06/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the draft reporting framework for the Interim Redress Scheme be noted.
17.132	06/07/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee note the status report as at 30 June 2017 on the Shalom Christian College Renewal Strategy.
17.139	06/07/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the committee withdraw the recognition as a minister of Rev Mel Perkins effective from 7 July 2017.
17.140	06/07/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approve the Treasury Policy.
17.141	06/07/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee note the report on the General Secretary First Year Review.
17.142	06/07/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that Rev Heather den Houting be commended and affirmed for her leadership in the role of General Secretary, Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod.
17.143	06/07/2017	It was <u>AGREED</u> that the name of the Queensland Synod – Mission and Strategy 2016-2018 document be amended to clarify that the mission and strategy of the Synod is developed elsewhere, and it is the General Secretary's role to implement that mission and strategy.
17.144	06/07/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee note the draft Queensland Synod – Mission and Strategy 2016-2018 report.
17.145	06/07/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Agreement</u> that the Synod office budget 2017/18 be referred to the next meeting of the Synod Standing Committee to allow appropriate consultation with UCQ regarding the stewardship fee.
17.146	06/07/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the General Secretary look into other means of funding the Synod Reserve Fund and give further consideration as to why grants to Presbytery are increasing, and report to the next meeting of the Synod Standing Committee.
17.147	06/07/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee authorise the General Secretary to sign the Stewardship Contribution Agreement with UnitingCare Queensland on behalf of the Synod once the form and content has been finalised.
17.148	06/07/2017	Subject to the amendments as tabled and agreed at the meeting, it was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approve the Queensland Synod By-laws as included in Attachment A, effective 14 July 2017 and replacing all By-laws in existence at that date.
17.151	06/07/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that incumbent Synod board or committee members wishing to re-nominate to a committee may do so provided they do not exceed the maximum years of service at the commencement of the 33rd Synod in Session.
17.153	06/07/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the General Secretary will provide a quarterly report on all legal disputes or claims made against the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod to the Synod Standing Committee.
17.158	03/08/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee note the Schools and Residential Colleges Commission report.
17.159	03/08/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod office budget 2017/18 be approved.
17.160	03/08/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the response to budget questions at the 6 July 2017 meeting report be noted.

#	Meeting date	Resolution
17.161	03/08/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the 33rd Synod General Update report be noted.
17.162	03/08/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee endorse the draft SSC report to the 33rd Synod in Session and delegate authority to the General Secretary to consider and finalise the report.
17.163	03/08/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Agreement</u> that the Synod Standing Committee endorse the proposal to the 33rd Synod in Session that the Legal Reference Committee be disbanded, and delegate authority to the General Secretary to finalise the report.
17.164	03/08/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee endorse the following proposals to the 33rd Synod in Session and delegate authority to the General Secretary to finalise the report: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create two new sub-committees of the SSC: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Remuneration and Nomination Committee</li> <li>(b) Audit and Risk Committee</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Disband the Governance Nomination Remuneration Committee.</li> </ol>
17.165	03/08/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that Mr Collins and Mr Lister be the proposers to submit and sign the Queensland Synod Governance Structure Changes proposal to the 33rd Synod in Session.
17.166	03/08/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee endorse a letter requesting a presidential ruling on the moderator term to be submitted to Assembly by the Moderator.
17.167	03/08/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approve the Constitution of Emmanuel College.
17.168	03/08/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that, recognising that the Constitution of Emmanuel College requires the approval from the Senate of the University of Queensland and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia (Qld), the Synod Standing Committee delegate authority to the General Secretary to consider and finalise any resultant changes provided they are immaterial and not to the detriment of the position of the Uniting Church.
17.169	03/08/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. approves the creation of an incorporated charitable joint venture Company Limited by Guarantee (“the JV”) between the Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (Q.) and the Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (NSW).</li> <li>2. approves the Joint Venture Constitution.</li> <li>3. approves the Joint Venture Members Agreement.</li> <li>4. approves the delegation of the members accountability to the UnitingCare Queensland Board in accordance with the Constitution and Members Agreement.</li> <li>5. notes that on delegation of the member’s accountabilities to the UnitingCare Board, the UCQ Board will exercise the member’s role to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• appoint jointly with Uniting NSW.ACT, the Executive Chair</li> <li>• appoint two Directors as per the Members Agreement</li> <li>• agree with Uniting NSW appropriate remuneration for the Executive Chair and Directors.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
17.170	03/08/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that further work and consultation be undertaken on the proposed Person of Concern policy.
17.172	03/08/2017	It was <u>AGREED</u> that all committee members be provided with their terms served on the Synod Standing Committee ahead of the 33rd Synod in Session nomination process.

#	Meeting date	Resolution
17.174	03/08/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that further work be undertaken on the proposal for making Synod papers publicly available on the Synod website prior to the Synod in Session.
17.175	03/08/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee endorse the proposed approach to the preparing for Assembly conversation in Queensland.
17.176	03/08/2017	It was <u>AGREED</u> that the TCQ student numbers be reported back to the committee.
17.177	03/08/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee note the BCF six-monthly report.
17.178	03/08/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee approve an optional dual track placements process for a trial period of three years commencing 1 January 2018.
17.179	03/08/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the Synod Standing Committee note the Safe Ministry with Children Final Report.
17.180	03/08/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that the FIPB Quarterly Report for Quarter 4 2016/17 be received, including the quarterly finance report for the Synod office for the period ended 30 June 2017.
17.181	03/08/2017	It was <u>RESOLVED by Consensus</u> that Synod Standing Committee note the UCQ report to Synod Standing Committee against the Annual Statement of Missional Intent.





# #realunitingchurch

Report from

## **Governance Nomination Remuneration Committee**

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### Context

The Governance Nomination Remuneration Committee (GNRC) provides governance support and performs an advisory role to governing bodies of the Synod through effective and consistent governance processes. The functions of the GNRC include those related to governance, nomination and remuneration.

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Since the last Synod in Session, the GNRC has continued to work closely with the Synod office Human Resources team with regard to the review of ministry agent payment and benefits. This work culminated in a number of recommendations regarding policies that relate to ministry agent payment and benefits, or which direct the Synod office to undertake work and subsequent submissions that may change or establish a policy. These recommendations were approved by the Synod Standing Committee (SSC) and are complemented by a number of operational recommendations which have been provided to the general secretary for implementation by the Synod office.

During the course of this Synod term, Andrew McBryde resigned as chairperson of the GNRC and the resultant vacancy was filled by John Lister in accordance with the By-laws. Mr Lister was already an elected lay member to the Synod Standing Committee but upon his appointment as chairperson he became an ex officio member. The resultant vacancy on the SSC was filled by Louisa Yu in accordance with the By-laws. The GNRC wishes to thank Andrew for his significant contribution to the GRNC during his time as chairperson.

The GNRC recognises there is a shortfall in current membership as regards the requirements of the By-laws, however in light of the governance structure review being undertaken by the Synod, it was determined that active work on this matter would await the outcomes of this review. However following the resignation of Mr McBryde as chairperson, Greg Adsett was appointed as a member of the GNRC from 5 May 2017 until the 33rd Synod.

The GNRC acknowledges the contribution of its current members Rev David Baker, Rev Heather den Houting, Glenn Poole, John Lister, Bronwyn Clarkson and Greg Adsett.

As a result of a Synod in Session resolution regarding diverse representation on boards, committees and commissions, a program of work was commissioned to produce a comprehensive report on this topic. A diversity task group was established to workshop this topic and this task group included representatives from the GNRC. This work culminated in a report which was provided to Synod Standing Committee and the recommendations contained within will be resourced by the Synod office in conjunction with the diversity task group. One of the exciting initiatives from this work was the identification of early adopters who have commenced hosting "Welcome to the Table" dinners for people who might have the skills, gifts and interests and opportunities to engage in the work of the wider church through all its activities.

Alongside the work on diversity which the GNRC has championed, the GNRC has considered the approach to be taken to the establishment of a candidate pool for membership of Synod boards, committees and commissions.

## Priority Directions

Through its contribution to the diversity task group and in considering strategies for the establishment of a candidate pool for membership of Synod boards, committees and commissions, the GNRC has maintained its focus on encouraging stable and inspirational leadership within the church.

## Report

The GNRC has contributed to the strengthening of a number of policies of the church, including:

- Award Staff Remuneration Policy and Processes
- Anti-Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Employment Equity Policy and Tools
- Discipline Policy, Processes and Tools
- Employee Assistance Program Policy
- Family and Domestic Violence Policy
- Grievance Management
- Induction Policy, Processes and Tools
- Leave Policy and Processes
- Performance Management Policy, Processes and Tools
- Position and Establishment Management Policy, Processes and Tools
- Prevention of Workplace Harassment and Bullying Policy and Processes
- Probity Policy, Processes and Tools
- Recognition of Service Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy, Processes and Tools
- Synod Standing Committee and Synod Support Staff Role Conflict Policy
- Synod-wide Governing Body Remuneration Policy and Processes
- Termination Policy, Processes and Tools
- Volunteer Management and Tools

- Work Experience and Student Placement Policy and Tools.

A number of reviews also have been undertaken by the GNRC, including:

- Annual lay staff salary review
- Annual stipend and allowance review
- Remuneration review for the UnitingCare Queensland Board, board committees and the Australian Regional and Remote Community Services
- Not-for-profit remuneration benchmarking data.

The GNRC also had representation on the UnitingCare Queensland Chair Review Panel and the UnitingCare Queensland Board Reappointment Panel.

## Challenges/risks as we progress

The future governance structure of the Synod has been under review to determine whether a more contemporary governance model could assist in the functioning of the church in Queensland. The GNRC have supported the general secretary and Synod Standing Committee in this work.

## For consideration

The GNRC may be impacted by other proposals to the 33rd Synod with regard to the future governance structure of the Synod.

## Proposal

It is proposed that the 33rd Synod receive this report.

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### Contact for report questions:

Name: John Lister  
Position: Chairperson, Governance Nomination Remuneration Committee  
Email: [governance@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:governance@ucaqld.com.au) Phone: 07 3377 9777



# #realunitingchurch

Report from

## **Synod Advisory Committee on Ministerial Placements**

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### Context

The Placements Committee (Advisory Committee on Ministerial Placements) is responsible for the oversight of the processes that enable the placement of ministers, ministers from other denominations, and lay people in particular specified ministries.

Membership includes the moderator (chairperson), associate general secretary (secretary), each presbytery minister, delegate of the CEO of UnitingCare Queensland, the executive officer of the Queensland Chaplaincy Commission, and the Director of Christian Formation or delegate. This geographically diverse membership brings together a collective story about what is happening across the life of the church and what resources are best able to meet the needs of particular ministry locations.

### Priority Directions

Through its oversight and discernment function, the Placements Committee seeks to match ministers and vacant placements. In doing this, the Placements Committee is mindful of the priority directions and how these impact on the needs of placements.

# Report

## Placements review

The 31st Synod (October 2014):

Resolved to direct the Synod Standing Committee to initiate a review of the placements process to seek to deal with issues such as:

- The length of supply ministry between placements.
- Availability of suitable leadership for church plants/redevelopment projects and specialist placement venues.
- The decreasing influence of the Uniting Church in Australia in leadership in provincial cities and regions.

In response the Synod Standing Committee (November 2014) directed a task group to look at the placements process in and of itself. The associated matters of leadership development and the influence of the church are being taken up in work associated with the Key Change Initiatives.

Extensive consultation was undertaken across the Synod in 2015. This identified some major factors impacting on the placements process:

- (i) Financial resources of congregations and the wider church are diminishing.
- (ii) Changes in family life impact on a minister's capacity or willingness to make significant intra-state moves.
- (iii) Increasing number of part-time placements.
- (iv) South east Queensland preference and/or reluctance to be placed in rural/remote areas.
- (v) Reduced number of suitably skilled ministers available for placement.
- (vi) Number and size of congregations is diminishing.

Coming from this consultation, the most commonly proposed revisions to the current process include:

- (i) Increased transparency and openness in the placements process.
- (ii) Move to a deregulated/open system of placements allowing congregations and ministry workers to exercise greater initiative in the placements processes.
- (iii) The importance of emphasising honesty in profile documents.
- (iv) Emphasis on recruitment and appropriate training of ministers for the current/emerging context (together with CEM for existing ministers).
- (v) More strategic focus in terms of succession planning.

In August 2017 the Synod Standing Committee approved the implementation of the optional dual track process for an initial trial period of three years, commencing 1 January 2018.

The introduction of a dual track placements process will allow Joint Nominating Committees (JNCs) and ministers a choice of whether to proceed using a flexible placements process that provides greater freedom and initiative or to continue to use the highly regulated current placements process.

The option to use the delegated process will shift the locus of the operation of the placements process from the Synod to the presbytery and congregation as councils giving 'heed to one

another' (*Basis of Union* para. 15). It seeks to loosen up the functioning of the placements process at a local and regional level, while retaining (or adding) some discretionary interventional capacities for the Placements Committee to exercise its discretion to support the wider missional needs of the church beyond a particular congregation, placement or even presbytery.

As JNCs and ministers are empowered through the optional process, they will have a greater capacity to manage the process, time lines and will have greater involvement in the outcome.

Through the use of the optional delegated pathway, it is hoped to bring a greater sense of transparency to the process so that those most intimately involved in the discernment process, ministers and JNCs, might feel that they know what is happening and be empowered to act.

The proposal involves working within the current regulatory framework, but with the Placements Committee exercising its power in a way that is consistent with the principles of flexibility and empowering JNCs and ministers to exercise initiative.

Elements of the process that will be amended from the current process are:

- All vacant placements to be notified in *Uniting News* at the time the placement is known to be coming vacant, not when a profile is presented to the Placements Committee as currently happens.
- A password-protected online database of vacant placements and ministers available for placement will be created. Access will be given to JNCs and ministers who opt to use the alternative track.
- Placements Committee to delegate to the secretary of Placements Committee the ability to refer JNCs and ministers to each other for conversation, once one of them has indicated they wish to enter into conversation. Protocols will be established that ensure this is an operational delegation and not an exercise of discernment.
- Placements Committee to delegate to the secretary of Placements Committee the ability to approve requests to advertise vacant placements; currently the Placements Committee makes this decision. Again, protocols will be established for the exercise of this delegation.
- Prior to a conversation, the JNC and minister will be asked to provide a written response addressing the points of connection in preparation for the discernment conversation.
- Training will be provided to JNCs that addresses the process and the practice of discernment.

The Placements Committee will continue to have a general oversight function of the placements process and, where it considers necessary, can act in what it sees as the best interests of the wider church and individual ministers and placements. The Placements Committee also believes that, with the possibility of less of its time taken on transactional business, it will have greater time to devote to strategic thinking, vocational trajectories, and general oversight of the trends and needs of placements across the state.

## Statistics as at 1 August 2017

Total number of approved placements (including vacancies)	300
Number of approved placements less than full time	111
Number of ministry agents in approved placements	245
Ordained	178
Lay	67
Male	160
Female	85

## Challenges/risks as we progress

- Our ability to resource the church's witness in locations of strategic importance geographically, organisationally, and demographically with suitably skilled ministry agents.
- The rise in the number of part-time placements demands the need to rethink the nature of ministry in the placement. When placements reduce from full time, history shows that without significant, purposeful intervention, the fraction of the placement continues to decrease.
- Placements Committee continues to work with presbyteries and councils to find constructive ways to respond when the vitality of a placement come into question.

## Proposal

It is proposed that the 33rd Synod receive this report.

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### Contact for report questions:

Name: David Fender  
Position: Secretary, Placements Committee  
Email: david.fender@ucaqld.com.au  
Phone: 3377 9822



# #realunitingchurch

## Report from **Bremer Brisbane Presbytery**



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### Context

The Bremer Brisbane Presbytery consists of diverse congregations that include affluent suburbs close to Brisbane, multi-cultural and socially disadvantaged communities in the south and west of Brisbane with growth areas at Forest lake, Springfield and Ripley as well as developments around Ipswich and the rural communities south and west of Ipswich. Presbytery is bounded by the Great Dividing Range in the west and includes the Brisbane, Bremer, Lockyer, and Teviot Valleys. It includes the West Moreton District of South East Queensland, the regional city of Ipswich, and the western suburbs of Brisbane. It is experiencing strong growth. Most of this growth is in urban, dormitory suburbs. Towns in the West Moreton area are experiencing significant social change as population growth occurs. Ipswich city is being rejuvenated; socially disadvantaged populations are transferring to places in Ipswich and towns in the West Moreton as costs of living in Brisbane increase. The western suburbs of Brisbane are still attractive places for professional and business people. The Presbytery includes significant educational and corrective services facilities.



# Priority Directions

There is a strong correlation between the Presbytery's strategic plan and the Synod's discerned priorities. As such it is helpful to reflect upon the Presbytery's efforts and achievements in terms of those priority directions.

## **To be Christ-centred, at prayer, and listening**

The church at its very core is called to be Christ-centred, at prayer and listening to the Spirit as it discerns its way forward. Prayer undergirds the worship, witness and service life of congregations with most congregations having regular prayer groups and prayer gatherings. Several congregations run prayer days and prayer vigils, Fassifern has hosted a prayer weekend for the last two years and decisions at congregational and Presbytery level are enveloped in prayer.

The challenge is always to hold the balance between action and contemplation, between word and deed, between being fed and nourished and being engaged in mission. There needs to be a deliberateness to the listening but also an intentionality that enables us to move and respond to the Spirit's call.

## **Discipleship**

Discipleship has been a clear focus of the Presbytery. The appointment of a full-time person with the role of facilitating discipleship is a key part of the Presbytery strategy commenced in November 2016. A mission matrix is being developed that will help congregations assess their life, ministry and mission against their own particular context. Particular activities aimed at encouraging our young people will be covered in that section but they are aimed at encouraging young people to explore the Christian faith in the context of their lives and relationships. Each congregation is encouraged to disciple and grow the people within their midst and the Presbytery seeks to encourage life-long learning and faith development within their local setting. Particular Presbytery events include a discipleship week presented by Craig Mitchell in combination with The Downs presbytery. The Presbytery has shared the leadership of the MSM (Mission Shaped Ministry) program with the Moreton Rivers and South Moreton Presbyteries. One of the outcomes of this emphasis on discipleship is the increased number of people enrolling in a Period of Discernment with currently 11 people enrolled and more expressions of interest.

One of our major challenges is that everyone is at a different place and space and has different needs. There is no one-stop-shop that will meet everyone's needs and it is a challenge and a calling to help our people continue to grow and respond to God's call upon their lives and to continue to grow in mission, witness and service. The other challenge is for all congregations to discipleship and encouragement of their people, at whatever age and stage, to be active in worship, witness and service. We need to regain an urgency about sharing the faith in ways that are relevant and appropriate. All congregations need to take this seriously if they are to thrive.

## **Leadership**

Leadership is a key issue for the church and for the Presbytery. Ministers and lay people offer leadership within their congregation and community. Individual congregations conduct leadership training and mentoring as people undertake leadership roles. Leadership training is an important part of many of our youth and children's programs both at congregational and Presbytery level. Without restating all the events, they do provide leadership and training opportunities while being mentored by a more experienced person. These include Easter Madness, Renovators, Stretching Faith etc. The Presbytery conducts evenings for church council chairs, secretaries, treasurers and property people to support and inform their leadership roles. The Presbytery has set up an education and training committee with the specific intent of resourcing congregational leaders.

Many of the Presbytery's ministers avail themselves of leadership opportunities including the Synod Leadership training program and national and regional conferences provided by the church, other churches, and para-church organisations. These include but are not limited to UL16 and 17, president's conferences, MSM, 3DM, and other conferences. Many of our people, both lay and ordained, have been active in the Queensland Community Alliance and have completed two and six day training with them. There are several congregations that are strongly involved in Emmaus and Chrysalis and the Uniting Church provides strong leadership into those communities.

The challenge for many congregations is with the aging of the church, and being able to hand over to a new generation of leaders. Nor is there a guarantee that the new leaders wish to take over the current structures and processes.

### **Connecting with communities**

Community connection is the lifeblood of most congregations who achieve this in a variety of ways. Supporting other organisations, at times providing strong leadership into them, running community-based programs, usage of facilities; all of these provide the potential for strong connections between congregation and community. These include but are not limited to Messy Church, MSM, Crossroads, support of chaplains and para-church organisations, Habitat for Humanity, various community clubs, eisteddfods, opportunity shops, and welfare support.

If we seek to be Presbytery-specific then the work within the Queensland Community Alliance has been invaluable in giving us a connection and purpose as we engage with unions and community groups around creating a better society and working for the common good. There have been some good connections and actions that have come out of working with the Alliance. Training in MSM and 3DM also provides training opportunities to help people connect to their communities. Though many churches have programs it is worth noting that the Indooroopilly Asylum Seeker program and the Active Faith program (university chaplaincy) are both assisted financially by strategic project funding.

The challenge in many congregations is the balance between building up the body and connecting to the community. Though we know that reaching out to the community builds the body up, there are congregations whose limited people power is involved in pastoral care and keeping the church going rather than reaching out into the community. In other congregations the balance between inward and outward focus by ministers, lay leaders and church councils is an ongoing tension.

## **Youth, children and families**

The Presbytery's discipleship facilitator has re-energised this space. Presbytery events have been revitalised with Community on the Green, Encounter and Stretching Faith as well as meeting with and supporting youth leaders and pastors. Currently there are six dedicated youth and family pastors as well as other pastors and ministers working in this area. Many congregations are running youth groups, playgroups, Sunday Schools, Messy Church, and are involved in schools teaching RI and active on school committees and communities.

The Presbytery regularly runs the Safe Ministry with Children training and has a dedicated team of trainers. Three congregations run day camps and there are several congregations partnering with para-church organisations as they work with children and young people. There are congregations with active and vibrant ministry with young people and young adults. Presbytery staff and members have had key leadership roles in Easter Madness, the planned Synod young adult retreat, and Renovators as well as the training facilitated by MSM.

The challenge is that many congregations are older and are struggling to connect with the young people in their community. Neither do they have the critical mass to hold young families if they do come. Also for the congregations that do have young people, providing suitable leaders, activities and training opportunities to grow this important ministry area.

## **General issues**

The Bremer Brisbane Presbytery has many positive aspects to its life. Some of our highlights over the recent Synodial term include the opening of Forest Lake in its new home in Ellengrove and the growth that is being achieved there. The opportunity shop is creating wonderful community connections as is the welfare support, free bread and the links to local schools and wider community. Forest Lake has the potential to become a regional church and with good strong leadership it is moving in that direction.

The church plant in the Ripley Valley is continuing to move forward. Weekly gatherings have begun and Rev Kath Behan has been working well grounding herself in the community and creating good connections with residents and developers. Supported by Wesley Mission Queensland (WMQ) there is a relocation subsidy being offered for people willing to move and become a part of the Valley Church Faith Community. Conversations are also exploring other mission initiatives involving WMQ in this community.

Active Faith is a strategic project looking at connecting university students to three congregations: Indooroopilly, St Lucia and Toowong. Particularly working through the Uniting Church's colleges, this project is aimed at leveraging off our connections and seeing ourselves as partners with these colleges.

The Lockyer Valley consists of three congregations in the communities of Gatton, Laidley and Hatton Vale. The congregations are in different places but work is being done collaboratively to look at how we approach ministry in the region. Similarly, the Ipswich churches are being encouraged to revisit the collaboration begun under Imagine Ipswich which was the impetus for

the Ripley Valley church plant. There is also an intentional two-year placement shared between Kenmore and Brookfield to help determine future ministry directions.

## Challenges/risks as we progress

We have a number of congregations which are made up of older members who prefer a traditional style of worship and have increasing pastoral care needs. These congregations tend to be decreasing in numbers and their viability both financially and of resources continues to diminish. How to continue to provide appropriate ministry for them while still having energy and resources for green shoots.

The funding and resourcing of new initiatives and church plants is a key issue for the church and for our Presbytery, as we have a tendency to under-resource people, resources, funds and time before we expect them to be self-sufficient.

The challenge is to engage people at Presbytery and regional level when their lives feel so busy and their first commitment is to their local congregation. Finding fresh impetus and energy into the Presbytery space.

Some congregations suffer similar issues around people resources with much of the work being done by a dedicated few.

## Proposal

It is proposed that the 33rd Synod receive this report.

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### Contact for report questions:

Name: Rev Brian Hoole  
Position: Presbytery Minister  
Email: [presmin@bremerbrisbane.org.au](mailto:presmin@bremerbrisbane.org.au) Phone: 0417 667 671



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## Report from Calvary Presbytery



*[caption] Calvary Presbytery, Aurukun elders (2014)*

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### Context

Calvary Presbytery is the regional body of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC) in Queensland.

The Presbytery has oversight of seven Indigenous congregations.

In the Cape York and Gulf of Carpentaria region:

- Mapoon
- Napranum
- Aurukun
- Mornington Island.

In urban/rural locations:

- Gordonvale
- Townsville West End
- Zillmere, Brisbane.

The Presbytery is strongly committed to a covenant relationship with the wider Uniting Church.

## Congregational life

The focus of the Presbytery continues to be support for the congregations, their local leaders and communities. The congregations of Calvary are faithful, Christ-centred, and connected strongly with their communities.

**Mornington Island** has had an emphasis in the last year on working with local community agencies and organising activities for children and youth. Young people have participated in NCYC and Easter Madness. The current vacancy at Mornington Island hopefully will be filled by next year. The church building is being refurbished.

**Aurukun** has had a spiritual revival this year. We rejoice in the work of the Holy Spirit in that community. Many people (adults and children) have been baptised and now join in regular worship, both at church and at home fellowship meetings. There has been a lessening of conflict in the community which can be attributed in large part to the work of the Spirit. The lay church elders have provided faithful leadership and we give thanks to God for their energy and commitment.

**Napranum** is currently awaiting the appointment of a minister. The placement is to be filled by a minister from Fiji, who is still waiting for his visa application to be approved.

Rev Craig Mishewski is minister for the **Mapoon** community. He is half-time in this role and half-time with the Weipa Anglican-Uniting Cooperating Parish. The Mapoon congregation is a small group of children and youth. Craig also provides pastoral support to the whole community and volunteers in the Mapoon school.

The **Gordonvale** congregation, Eternal Life Fellowship, is a small group that has been supported for many years by Pastor Bill Hollingsworth. Bill is not able to provide direct assistance these days, so the elders exercise responsibility for leadership, for which we give thanks.

In **Townsville**, Rev Dennis Corowa combines his congregational ministry with prison and Blue Care chaplaincy. He is half-time Presbytery Minister.

**Zillmere** congregation is expanding under the oversight of Rev Saimoni Davui's ministry. He is well supported by committed lay leaders and the congregation is exploring with UnitingCare ways of providing consistent support to people who leave prison and others in need in the local community.

## Priorities

Noting the Synod's priority of youth, children, and families, Calvary congregations are developing a greater focus around youth and children's ministry. A major task is to produce culturally appropriate Christian education materials for use in our congregations.

We are encouraging emerging lay leaders to take up ministry and theology studies. Presently there are five students enrolled at Nungalinga College in Darwin and one at Trinity College. The

commitment of lay leaders in our congregations has been vital in their growth and committed discipleship.

## Highlights

The highlight over the last year has been the spiritual revival of the community of Aurukun. The challenge is to nurture the growth of mature Christian commitment and discipleship, and help sustain a unified congregation and reconciled community. This will be helped by the placement of a ministry agent at Aurukun when accommodation is obtained.

## Covenanting

We are constantly blessed by the encouragement and support we receive from the wider church's backing of its covenant relationship with Congress. For example, the Faith Works Uniting Community congregation were recently able to provide additional funding needed to proceed with the costly renovations to the Mornington Island church building. Presbyteries and the Synod in solidarity have been able to support Calvary's ongoing costs of ministry.

There is a desire on the part of the Presbytery to develop stronger covenant relationships between congregations. Organising opportunities for cultural exchange, visitations and other activities is a task that needs more resources than the Presbytery can offer. We believe that a covenanting officer position within the Synod and in partnership with Calvary Presbytery would help facilitate engagement.

## Challenges

Going forward, resourcing ministry is a considerable challenge for the Indigenous congregations and Presbytery. This applies particularly to capital resources. Once the Mornington Island renovations are complete, Calvary has no financial capital resources of its own with which to meet ongoing needs such as building a manse at Aurukun and ongoing repairs and maintenance requirements. A new approach to capital funding for First People's ministry is required.

We are awaiting the outcome of the Assembly's appeal for money to build a new church at Mapoon.

## Proposal

It is proposed that the 33rd Synod receive this report.

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### Contact for report questions:

Name: John Adams, Dennis Corowa  
Position: Presbytery Ministers  
Email: [john@calvarypresbytery.com.au](mailto:john@calvarypresbytery.com.au) Phone: 0457 707 103  
[dennis@calvarypresbytery.com.au](mailto:dennis@calvarypresbytery.com.au) Phone: 0408 871 354



# #realunitingchurch

Report from

## Presbytery of Central Queensland



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## Context

From the coastal regions of the Keppel Coast and Tannum Sands through the industrial area of Gladstone to the beef capital Rockhampton, north to the sugarcane of Mackay and Proserpine and west through the mining, farming and grazing areas of Gregory and Emerald, and further through the sparkling gem fields to the central west and its sheep and cattle grazing, we weave a rich and colourful tapestry. The Presbytery of Central Queensland is productive and diverse.



In our last report to Synod, the focus was squarely upon the negative impact of the mining downturn and associated practices, the severe drought and other significant climatic events. While the impact of the mining recession is ever present, the decline has slowed.

The impact of a sudden and unexpected severe weather event within a Presbytery of our size is enormous. On the back of Cyclone Marcia in 2015, Cyclone Debbie made her presence felt in April this year. The effects were concentrated on Proserpine, Mackay, Sarina and to a lesser extent the Rockhampton region. Cyclone damage to properties within this area is almost complete. After many months of watching the sky with anticipation, parts of the central west finally received some much-needed rain, enough to revive hope. But it is still difficult for everyone.

## Priority Directions

### Leadership

Lay leadership

In 2016 Rev Prof James Haire led a lay preacher workshop on the Gospel of Luke. James will in the near future lead a workshop on the Gospel of John.

A worship workshop was held in February 2017. Topics included: Elements and structure of worship, Fresh expressions of alternative worship by the emerging church, Open discussions, Cuppa with Jesus, Worship service streaming, Prayer in worship.

On 29 January 2017 a service was held at South Rockhampton Uniting Church to recognise 60 years of lay preaching by Alan Demack. Alan continues to lead worship faithfully in the Parish of Rockhampton South.



**Messy Church goes to the beach**

### Discipleship

- Growing disciples through:
- Messy Church
- Cuppa with Jesus
- Walk to Emmaus
- Chrysalis Flights
- Mentoring the younger generation to encourage the building up of young leaders
- Resourcing. During meetings of the Presbytery our remote area ministry facilitator shares resources concerning rural ministry or ministry in

small congregations. There have been resources for lay people within congregations to lead worship. These have been helpful. Early next year the Presbytery is planning workshops on funerals and grief as well as mission resourcing.

### Youth, children and families

Country Madness 2017

Held in April 2017 at Seaforth near Mackay, the goals of our youth task group were to build relationships between young people of the Uniting Church across a wider area and to encourage our young people to engage more deeply with God.

## Connecting with communities

### Remote area ministry

The Presbytery responded to concerns raised in recent years in its meetings and in Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC) over the viability and sustainability of ministry and congregations in the rural areas within its oversight. An earlier meeting held in Emerald in January 2015 favoured investigating the concept of resource ministry. Thus, the remote area ministry facilitator position began in March 2016.

### Disaster recovery chaplain

Rev Malcolm Bottrill has been appointed and has commenced work. He is travelling around the various communities affected by Cyclone Debbie and is providing reports on his progress to date. His role may be extended if applications for funding from Assembly and Synod are successful.

## Report



**Drought** in the west has eased, although more rain is required. From this rain, some 'herbage' aka 'weeds' grew for a while. Some of this was edible for sheep and/or cattle. Some landowners could buy in animals for fattening or bring home some of the stock they had on agistment. Those animals have since had to be cleared again. Sixty six per cent of Queensland is still in drought and Longreach is in the centre of that. Assistance has been received, sometimes to the detriment of local businesses.

Major issues are expected around September/October when the household allowances start being withdrawn. They are paid by Centrelink and the terms under which they were introduced were for a set period. That is what has been putting food on the table for many people. When it ends, there is no chance for extension although the drought continues. What happens then is unknown, as the donations have all but dried up.

**Cyclone recovery** has been consistent although some repairs are still to be carried out. Some repairs on the Capricorn Coast from Cyclone Marcia are nearing completion whilst work because of Cyclone Debbie is still to be actioned.



Cyclone?  
What Cyclone?

What we do see is the resilience that is in our communities. People struggle and some longer than others but when the body of Christ, in whatever form that may be, journeys with them we see hope.

Those who minister in the region, lay and ordained, are often surprised and delighted to discover that God is already there in our communities. It is a joy to walk alongside the people of Central Queensland through all the situations that arise, always on the lookout for the new shoots of God's work.

Our disaster recovery minister Rev Malcolm Bottrill has 'hit the ground running' in the northern areas of our Presbytery and the southern areas of the North Queensland Presbytery as an impartial and understanding presence. There has been no time lost making contacts and sowing seeds in this ministry. In all areas visited, people have welcomed the minister with open arms and conversation. People are looking for support and are keen to talk to someone who is not tied to a government authority or insurance company.

Issues outside the mainstream of property damage and loss were identified; issues such as mental health, domestic violence, increased drug and alcohol problems and relationship stress.

Malcolm is blessed with affirmations and is eager to build on the work that he has done so far.

### Remote area ministry

Desired outcomes from this process were:

- Assessing congregational viability and where appropriate, the re-alignment of any existing congregational relationships.
- Identifying available education resources for the laity.
- Identifying ministry provision in a range of models to operate throughout the Presbytery.
- Promoting a more visible Christian presence in communities.
- Identifying adequate resources to give ongoing expression to desired outcomes.
- Forming links with 'stronger' congregations throughout the Synod/Presbytery and beyond.
- Identifying suggestions for rationalisation of property to effect significant cost saving.

Stage 1 of our remote area ministry has been completed and a report provided to Presbytery. The outcome is three models of mission and 12 proposals that were presented to our July 2017 Presbytery meeting by Rev Arthur Tutin, remote area ministry facilitator. The foundation of these proposals is the development of meaningful partnerships with the sharing of resources throughout the Presbytery: human, intellectual, property and financial. It is now our task to implement those recommendations moving forward. As Arthur says, 'we're all in this together'.



The inaugural **Country Madness 2017** camp at Seaforth near Mackay, facilitated by the youth task group, was successful. Building on the success of 2017, it is hoped that momentum will carry the group onto bigger and better things in 2018. Country Madness 2017 was successful in both building relationships between young people of the Uniting Church across a wider area and encouraging our young people to engage more deeply with God. Although participation was geographically limited to coastal areas, we hope that reports will encourage others in Central and North Queensland Presbyteries to join in next year.

Thirty four campers registered for this inaugural event and with 16 leaders, our attendees were certainly supported.

Lael Piteau from Melbourne (YWAM trainer with many years of experience) was our guest speaker/teacher. She brought Joanna Aherne with her as a support person. Her main interest is encouraging us to believe that God wants to interact with us, speak to us and guide us. There were several prayer opportunities throughout camp, and people sharing what God did in those times grabbed everyone's attention.

Feedback from campers and leaders alike reported that God was certainly present amongst them and encouraging everyone to know Him more.

**Leadership** building continues with lay preacher workshops and lay presidency training sessions. Our compliance with Safe Ministry with Children policies continues to be a high priority.

**Discipleship** in Central Queensland is diverse, with activities such as 'Cuppa with Jesus', Messy Church and regular worship that are active expressions of the body of Christ continuing to nurture faith. The mission of these fresh and traditional expressions is to be vibrant communities, providing a safe and caring place that nurtures health and well-being and a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Due to the tyranny of distance, looking for ways to resource these discipleship processes of our communities requires the assistance of technologies which are now becoming more accessible. Tools that enable communication and the participation of people without the need for long-distance travel are being trialled to enable the people of God to tell the story of the love of God.

An example of an ecumenical tool which is being used by many Uniting Church members in Central Queensland is the Walk to Emmaus and Chrysalis Flight programs which offer an understanding of the gift of God's grace. Discipleship is expressed by our younger generation. Even though they may have moved for study or work out of Central Queensland they return to the region to be part of building up young leaders.

The benefit of this is that it initiates relationships with people from the community; it enables the body of Christ to be a witness of God's love through service, providing an additional or alternative way for all people to learn about faith.

Mentoring these and other expressions is a key function for the building up of the church and for the service of the world to which the church is sent.

**Joyful news** from our Presbytery, with two ministers and their spouses blessing our meetings with baby girls since our last Synod. They certainly brighten our gatherings.

Our **ministerial candidate** continues her studies at Trinity College Queensland.

**Fresh Expressions**, which arose out of the Synod-funded visit from Mark Berry from the United Kingdom in 2015, has expanded on the coast and now includes sessions at other churches, alternating so that there is a meeting almost every week.

## Challenges/risks as we progress

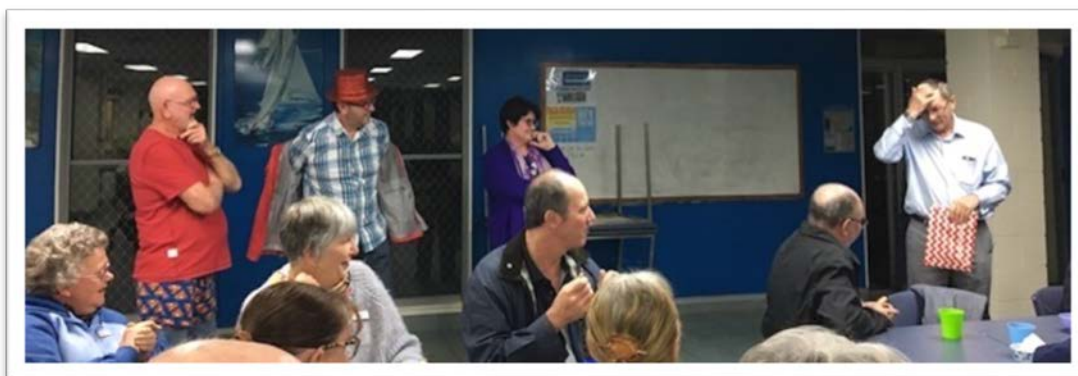
### **‘Juggling hot coals and cyclones’**

One of our challenges will be to disseminate the results of the work that Rev Arthur Tutin has done and take them into the next ‘period of mission’, particularly the major recommendations of connecting our congregations through the installation and utilisation of information and communication technology, with ‘viable’ congregations nearer the coast streaming interactive services and workshops to smaller rural congregations. This is an ideal resource to share our worship, workshops and Safe Ministry with Children training. Our support for the coalfields is upheld within this program.

Our disaster recovery support is a challenge and Rev Malcolm Bottrill will continue his good work among the people of Cyclone Debbie-affected coastal Central Queensland.

## For consideration

At our July meeting we paid our respects and delivered our gratitude to our retiring Presbytery Minister, Rev Brian Gilbert. Whilst Brian formally retires at the end of the year, he effectively retires soon after this meeting and will then enjoy a well-earned rest.



A Joint Nominating Committee identified a new Presbytery Minister to take up this role from 1 February 2018. Rev Dr Kerry Pierce has accepted a call to ministry across this Presbytery and we wish her every blessing as she prepares to lead us into the future.

## Proposal

It is proposed that the 33rd Synod receive this report.

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### Contact for report questions:

Name: Sheri Holland  
Position: Presbytery secretary  
Email: [cqsecretary@centralqldpresbytery.org.au](mailto:cqsecretary@centralqldpresbytery.org.au) Phone: 07 4927 4641



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## Report from **Mary Burnett Presbytery**



Celebrating 40 years of the Uniting Church in Australia at Alexandra Park

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## Context

Extending from Beerwah in the south to Eidsvold and Burnett Heads in the north and west to Kingaroy, Mary Burnett Presbytery is a combination of urban centres and small rural communities, from beach-side high-rises to hinterland acreages and large properties. Within its bounds are great holiday destinations like the Sunshine Coast, the iconic Fraser Island and the Blackall Ranges. It features the Coloured Sands, the home of Bundaberg rum and ginger beer, the Burnett and Mary River catchments, the Glasshouse Mountains, and as its geographical centre—Gympie, the gold city—the community which saved Queensland's financial crisis through the discovery of gold.

It is home to 44 worshipping communities. This doesn't include services held by our diligent chaplains and ministers in hospitals and in our agencies.

The Presbytery wants to be focussed on the mission Jesus call us to, of making disciples. Being diverse geographically, we are also diverse in the ways this mission is expressed locally through our congregations, agencies, chaplaincies and faith communities.

## Priority Directions

### Our governance

- We have intentionally moved away from the Presbytery Minister being both Presbytery Minister and Presbytery chairperson. These roles are now split.
- We recently approved the formation of a mission/strategy task group.
- We commissioned a report on the appointment of an office administrative person.
- We published our delegation document which confirms who or which group is responsible for the plethora of tasks assigned to Presbytery under the Regulations. (Our thanks to Bremer Brisbane for their assistance)

### Enhancing mission

- Financial assistance to Gympie Indoor Skate Park, an initiative of a young couple from Gympie church; several first-time commitments made.
- Spearheaded thorough research and conversations around the future of Alex Park.
- Montville Art Gallery.
- Taken over the pastoral connections with the Dostana group.

### Ministry highlights

- Service of closure for Rev Bob Harriman after five years as Presbytery Minister.
- 40th anniversary celebrations at Alex Park.
- Commissioning of Bruce Ames (Buderim), Gil Young Park (Korean congregation at Maroochydore), Steven Fincham (prison chaplaincy) and Allan Mulcahy (Cooroy–Pomona).
- Commissioning of Pastor Jim Hohnke in Maryborough.
- Induction of Rev Stuart Bosch in Bundaberg.
- Induction of Rev Ron Watson in Cooroy–Pomona.
- Induction of Rev Chris Crause as Presbytery Minister.

### **New Presbytery Minister: some personal reflections!**

As the new Presbytery Minister, I'm progressing well in achieving the goals I set for my ministry in the first year. Meeting every ministry agent over coffee, attending worship in every congregation and spending time with each congregation and/or their leadership afterwards is on my agenda to achieve before Christmas. I'm certainly on track to achieve that.

Since I've started, workshops at our zone meetings and my own preaching opportunities leading worship in a dozen congregations have focussed on Priority 1 (including non-attenders) and Priority 2 (faith-sharing).

The church plant at Bells Faith Community (0.5, plus 0.5 chaplaincy at Unity College) is growing, with discussions about making it a full-time church plant on the agenda (Priority 3 – church planting).

I've taken up the daunting but very exciting task of understanding the possible future scenarios for Alex Park. A lot of good ground work was done in the last year. The Presbytery has just created a mission and strategy group to further brainstorm these and wider issues (Priority 7 – renewed resource use/sharing). We want to be more strategic and less reactive when it comes to future rationalisation/amalgamation/planting in the Presbytery (Priority 3 – church planting). The intention is to take on board the McCrindle, NCLS and Spirited Consulting results in our planning and discernment about our future. What does this mean for us in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd stages of congregational life?

### **Ministry agents**

We congratulate Leonie Gaffel, Phil Smith and Catherine Solomon from this Presbytery who have completed the Grad Cert in Leadership through Adelaide College of Divinity and Trinity College Queensland. (Priority 4 – developing leaders).

We will be farewelling some of our long-serving ministerial agents at the end of the year. We thank God for their contribution in this Presbytery.

## **Challenges/risks as we progress**

We've identified that one of the major challenges for Mary Burnett is to move from a reactive style of operating to one we see as proactive. Often the reactive mode is the only option left by the time an issue comes to Standing Committee or Pastoral Relations Committee. The creation of a strategy and mission group is a step forward in addressing this concern.

For example, we believe that we need to have conversations about which congregations need to talk to one another about collaboration (or possibly even more) before we get to a point of someone asking for a ministry position to be reduced or terminated. We need to think strategically about what might serve God's work better in a context with diminishing resources, the depopulation of rural areas and the growing frailty of members.

Key areas include the depopulation of rural areas, better use of resources (people and things), a major new hospital without a Uniting Church chaplaincy presence, Alex Park becoming more than a "place with great potential", building bridges between congregations and agencies, and a ministry to retired ministers and spouses.

How can we keep faith with appropriate regulatory frameworks like fire safety, Safe Ministry with Children etc. for small, rural congregations who simply cannot afford the costs to comply?

How will we respond as a church to issues like same-sex marriage and safe schools? This represents a huge potential challenge.



## For consideration

There is a positivity and vitality in Mary Burnett Presbytery that makes us excited about the future.

## Proposal

It is proposed that the 33rd Synod receive this report.

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### Contact for report questions:

Name: Rev Chris Crause  
Position: Presbytery Minister  
Email: [crause@bigpond.net.au](mailto:crause@bigpond.net.au) Phone: 0407 902 625



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## Report from Moreton Rivers Presbytery

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### Context

Moreton Rivers Presbytery covers the geographic area from just south of the Brisbane River to just north of the Caboolture River, west to Kilcoy and east to Bribie Island.

This area includes 40 rural, semi-rural, urban and central business district congregations and faith communities.

There are approximately 70 placements within the Presbytery covering a range of ministries placed within congregations, Wesley Mission Queensland, UnitingCare Queensland, the Synod office, hospitals, schools, police, army and presbytery roles.

### Priority Directions

The Moreton Rivers Presbytery 2021 mission priorities are in line with the Synod Priority Directions.

- To be Christ-centred, at prayer, and listening
- Discipleship
- Leadership
- Connecting with communities
- Youth, children and families.
-

Since the last Synod in session we have used the Synod-identified priorities to help us shape our Moreton Rivers Presbytery 2021: 'Let it Flow' mission priorities. These mission priorities (listed below) have been adopted by the Presbytery and progress is being made on achieving these outcomes.

The 'Let it Flow' theme picks up on the image of the rivers in the Moreton Rivers Presbytery logo, also on the idea of wanting to join 'in the flow' of where the Spirit is already at work in bringing life-giving water to mission and ministry. It is about having a 'strengths-based approach' to setting the mission priorities of the Presbytery.

The mission statement, guiding values and mission priorities found within this document have come out of the work done in the Presbytery consultation report presented by Spirited Consulting (Carolyn Kitto) at the November 2016 meeting of Presbytery, conversations at the ministers' retreats in 2016 and 2017, work done by the Presbytery staff and also the Presbytery Standing Committee. In particular the three action items recommended in the Kitto report have helped shape this document.

The Presbytery Standing Committee held 'Mission priority' planning days in February and May 2017. The draft of the document was presented at the Presbytery meeting on 8 March 2017 by Rev John Ruhle as part of the Standing Committee report.

The plan was adopted at the Presbytery meeting on 29 July 2017. This is not a 'linear plan' but a framework that provides some sign posts that point us in the direction of where we are wanting to go.

## Moreton Rivers Presbytery 2021: 'Let it Flow'

### **Mission statement**

Encouraging and equipping God's people for God's mission.

### **Guiding values**

We value being:

- Strengths-based. We tell the good news stories of what God is already doing amongst us.
- Permission-giving. We are permission-giving in encouraging Spirit-led innovation and risk-taking.
- Outward-focussed. We are outward-focussed in our decisions and priorities.
- Generously collaborative. We work in collaborations with generosity and grace.

### **Mission priorities**

While continuing to work within the regulations and policies of the Uniting Church in Australia, as a Presbytery we are committed to the following mission priorities for the period 2017 to 2021.

By 2021 Moreton Rivers Presbytery:



will be a lighthouse for youth and children's ministry



congregations and ministry agents will be equipped and active in mission



congregations will be working collaboratively for mission and ministry with schools/communities/agencies and other congregations.

### Action points

#### **Moreton Rivers Presbytery will be a lighthouse for youth and children's ministry.**



- a) Seek to employ a full-time youth and children's ministry coordinator.
- b) Seek to employ a faith formation coordinator in collaboration with a preaching place.
- c) Continue and expand the mentoring of existing youth, children and family workers.
- d) Continue to build on the current range of events and programs for youth and children.
- e) Grow youth and children's ministry through collaborative partnerships.
- f) Share stories and resources with the wider Uniting Church in Australia about our youth and children's ministry.
- g) Encourage and equip through the Educating and Equipping Committee.

#### **Moreton Rivers Presbytery congregations and ministry agents will be equipped and active in mission.**



- a) Continue to employ the mission education officer.
- b) Employ a mission development officer – inner ring, in partnership with a preaching place.
- c) Employ a mission development officer – north, in partnership with a preaching place.
- d) Implement inner city church plant collaboration with Newlife Uniting Church.
- e) Support effective mission initiatives in the Presbytery.
- f) Increase greater engagement of Mission Shaped Ministry education by ministry agents and congregations.
- g) Initiate Fresh Expressions ministries.
- h) Share stories and resources with the wider Uniting Church in Australia of congregations active in mission.
- i) Encourage and equip through the Education and Equipping Committee.

#### **Moreton Rivers Presbytery congregations will be working collaboratively for mission and ministry with schools/communities/agencies and other congregations.**



- a) Focus collaborations on growing existing and Fresh Expressions of church.
- b) Enable and encourage congregations to collaborate with the wider Uniting Church in Australia.
- c) Enable and encourage congregations to collaborate with the wider community.
- d) Pastoral Relations Committee to be intentional in filling 'placements' that meet the goals of the 'Let it Flow' mission priorities.
- e) Share stories and resources with the wider Uniting Church in Australia of collaborations.
- f) Encourage and equip through the Resource and Pastoral Relations Committees.

# Challenges/risks as we progress

Risks and challenges for the Presbytery revolve around people and not property or finance. A number of congregations are struggling to have the people resources to provide sustainable ministry and mission in their context.

We are also finding a lack of suitably trained people to take on ordained ministry roles within the Presbytery.

The challenge of having suitably trained people for ordained ministry is being partly met through an additional focus on people entering into their Period of Discernment (we have a POD coordinator employed by the Presbytery part-time) and also by supporting the initiatives of Trinity College Queensland.

Coupled with this, the Learning for Living course and Mission Shaped Ministry training are helping congregations to be equipped for mission and ministry in their own context.

## Proposal

It is proposed that the 33rd Synod receive this report.

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### Contact for report questions:

Name: John Ruhle  
Position: Presbytery Minister  
Email: [presmin@moretonriverspresbytery.org.au](mailto:presmin@moretonriverspresbytery.org.au) Phone: 0419 482 226

# 'LET IT FLOW'

## MORETON RIVERS PRESBYTERY 2021: MISSION PRIORITIES

### Mission Statement:

Encouraging and Equipping God's People for God's Mission

### Guiding Values:

*We value being:*

**Strengths Based**

We tell the good news stories of what God is already doing amongst us;

**Permission Giving**

We are permission giving in encouraging Spirit-led innovation, & risk taking;

**Outward Focussed**

We are outward focussed in our decisions and priorities; and

**Generously Collaborative** We work in collaborations with generosity and grace.

### "Let it Flow" Mission Priorities:

While continuing to work within the regulations and policies of the UCA, as a Presbytery we are committed to the following Mission Priorities for the period 2017 to 2021.

### By 2021 Moreton Rivers Presbytery:



...will be a lighthouse for **Youth and Children's Ministry**;



...congregations and ministry agents will be equipped and active in **mission**; and



...congregations will be working **collaboratively** for mission and ministry with schools/communities/agencies and other congregations.

### 'LET it FLOW' MISSION PRIORITY ACTION POINTS:

Moreton Rivers Presbytery

**will be a Lighthouse for Youth and Children's Ministry**



- Seek to employ a full-time Youth and Children's Ministry Coordinator;
- Seek to employ a Faith Formation Coordinator in collaboration with a preaching place;
- Continue and expand the mentoring of existing youth, children and family workers;
- Continue to build on the current range of events and programs for youth and children;
- Grow Youth and Children's ministry through collaborative partnerships;
- Share stories and resources with the wider Uniting Church in Australia about our Youth and Children's ministry; and
- Encourage and equip through the Educating and Equipping Committee.

Moreton Rivers Presbytery

**congregations and ministry agents will be equipped and active in mission**



- Continue to employ the Mission Education Officer;
- Employ a Mission Development Officer – Inner Ring in partnership with a preaching place;
- Employ a Mission Development Officer – North in partnership with a preaching place;
- Implement Inner City Church Plant collaboration with NewLife Uniting Church;
- Support effective mission initiatives in the Presbytery;
- Increase greater engagement of Mission Shaped Ministry education by ministry agents and congregations;
- Initiate *Fresh Expression* ministries;
- Share stories and resources with the wider Uniting Church in Australia of congregations active in mission; and
- Encourage and equip through the Education and Equipping Committee.

Moreton Rivers Presbytery

**congregations will be working collaboratively for mission and ministry with schools/communities/agencies and other congregations.**



- Focus collaborations on growing existing and *Fresh Expressions* of church;
- Enable and encourage congregations to collaborate with the wider Uniting Church in Australia;
- Enable and encourage congregations to collaborate with the wider community;
- Pastoral Relations Committee be intentional in filling "placements" that meet the goals of the "Let it Flow" Mission Priorities;
- Share stories and resources with the wider Uniting Church in Australia of collaborations; and
- Encourage and equip through the Resource and Pastoral Relations Committees.

Notes:

1. The 'Let it Flow' theme picks up on the image of the rivers in the MRP logo, also on the idea of wanting to join 'in the flow' of where the Spirit is already at work in bringing *life giving water* to mission and ministry in the MRP. It is about having a 'strengths based approach' to setting the mission priorities of the Presbytery.
2. The Mission Statement, Guiding Values and Mission Priorities found within this document have come out of the work done in the Presbytery Consultation report presented by Spirited Consulting (Carolyn Kitto) at the November 2016 meeting of Presbytery, the ministers' conversations at the Ministers Retreats in 2016 and 2017, work done by the Presbytery Staff and also the Presbytery Standing Committee. In particular the three *action items* recommended in the Kitto Report have helped shape this document.
3. The Presbytery Standing Committee held 'Mission Priority' planning days in February and May 2017.
4. The draft of this document was presented at the Presbytery meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017 by Rev John Ruhle as a part of the Standing Committee report.
5. The plan was adopted at the Presbytery meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> July 2017.
6. This is not a 'linear plan' but a framework that provides some *sign posts* that point us in the direction of where we are wanting to go.

**TOGETHER ON THE WAY – ENRICHING COMMUNITY**

The Moreton Rivers Presbytery 2021: "Let it Flow" Mission Priorities are in line with the Synod Priority Directions.



That the Synod, as part of its journey of **Together on the way, enriching community:**

- To be Christ centred, at prayer, and listening
  - Discipleship
  - Leadership
  - Connecting with communities
  - Youth, children and families
- ...as the church grows, transitions and innovates.



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## Report from North Queensland Presbytery

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### Context

Covering almost one third of the geographical area of Queensland, the North Queensland Presbytery is not just a large rural presbytery. With major cities like Townsville, Cairns and Mount Isa, the North Queensland Presbytery contains within its bounds a range of varying contexts of ministries; urban, rural and remote.

The North Queensland Presbytery is also subject to major disruptive weather events with seasonal floods and multiple year-long droughts, all of which often dictate the effectiveness and timeliness of ministries within its bounds.

### Report

The focus within the North Queensland Presbytery has been around developing an emerging Presbytery-wide vision and direction. This has involved major changes in the focus and character of ministry in many of our congregations.

The creation of the Cassowary Coast Uniting Church out of the Innisfail, Tully and Mission Beach congregations has brought about a unifying vision and has enabled cooperative strategies which are reaching beyond the original scope of the previous town-based congregations into a more regional approach that is engaging smaller communities within the bounds of the Cassowary Coast.

There has been a determined focus on providing presence in the emerging growth corridors within the Presbytery, particularly south of Cairns and north of Townsville. Renewal of ministry in both locations is hoping to bring new focus and strategic thinking into these key areas of future ministry and growth.



The renewed focus on an effective and wide-ranging consultation process with congregations has resulted in giving both the congregations and the Presbytery the tools to think more strategically about the direction and ministry assets required in each of our congregations.

There is also a renewed focus emerging on lay leadership training and equipping people for ministry (something that has been neglected for many years). The appointment of a new lay education coordinator, coupled with recent changes at Trinity College Queensland, has enabled three new people to undertake a Period of Discernment and will in a few years' time raise up a number of well-trained and ministry-equipped lay people able to bring long-term stability within the ranks of our ministry team. This is particularly important within our identified growth areas.

The recent challenges brought on by Cyclone Debbie have also raised issues around how we and Central Queensland Presbytery can cooperatively support each other, both in times of emergency and in future mission development particularly in our western rural and remote areas. Key achievements/initiatives.

Something you want to report on in more detail. Please include identified outcomes where relevant.

## Priority Directions

### 1. To be Christ-centred, at prayer, and listening.

At all levels of the Presbytery and in all the mission undertaken within the bounds of the Presbytery, there has been an increasing encouragement to undertake this mission in the context of Christ-centred prayer. This is most obvious at our Presbytery meetings and in the growth of a number of prayer groups within the congregations.

### 2. Discipleship

As part of a renewed focus on lay leadership training, there is a focus on how we grow our laity through discipleship. Many congregations have renewed Bible study and prayer groups and the Presbytery is providing resources as required or requested.

### 3. Leadership

Currently the Presbytery has three people undertaking a Period of Discernment. There are also two people candidating for ordination. With the 'rebirth' of Trinity College Queensland, a number of intensive courses are planned for the training of lay preachers and pastors. There also has been some church council training to orientate new church council members to the polity and ethos of the Uniting Church.

### 4. Connecting with communities

North Queensland congregations, on the whole, traditionally have been very well connected within the communities they serve. This is being enhanced by embryonic discussions on the local level with UnitingCare in order to reinvigorate the presence of the church in both its congregational and agency forms.

### 5. Youth, children and families

While there are ongoing logistical difficulties in maintaining youth and children's camps and events, a number of congregations are targeting families in their mission plans. This has come with varying

degrees of success. Many rural communities have an 'age gap' between 17 and 35 years as young people move to larger regional centres for training and employment.

## Proposal

It is proposed that the 33rd Synod receive this report.

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### Contact for report questions:

Name: Rev Gary Hardingham

Position: Presbytery Minister

Email: [presmin@ucanq.com.au](mailto:presmin@ucanq.com.au)

Phone: 0409 276 940



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## Report from **South Moreton Presbytery**



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### Context

The Presbytery is primarily urban with some rural areas. It encompasses the growing southern suburban sprawl of Brisbane, the whole of Logan, Redland and Gold Coast cities, and part of the Scenic Rim local government area based around Beaudesert. This area includes some of the fastest growing areas in Australia, including the Brisbane-Gold Coast

corridor, Brisbane-Beaudesert corridor and major infill development west towards Ipswich.

While in area the Presbytery is smaller than others in Queensland, it is the largest in population density and the number of congregations.

The area includes significant industrial, retail, service, tourist, government and health facilities surrounded by substantial residential suburbs. Its people come from many ethnic groups (Logan City is one of the most culturally diverse regions in Australia), all socio-economic sectors and all ages.

There are 42 congregations (11 migrant-ethnic, at least five significantly cross-cultural) and five faith communities.

Consistent with the Uniting Church in Australia national demographic profile, most congregations in the Presbytery comprise mainly middle to upper age groups. Newlife Uniting Church Robina (Gold Coast) is Australia's largest Uniting Church congregation with up to 1700 attending worship each week.

Recent data suggests the following with regard to our congregations:

- 11 growing, 12 stable, 19 declining
- Approximately 7000 members and adherents
- 4800 in worship each week
- 20 candidates undertaking Period of Discernment.

## Focus since the last Synod

### **Regional discernment 2017-2021**

Presbytery is aware of the considerable struggle faced by its congregations in enacting their genuine desire to participate effectively in God's mission in their communities. Congregations are increasingly weighed down by the obligations of compliance, week-by-week organisation, budgetary limitations, upkeep of property and just continuing to be the church in their area. Yet as congregations age and there are fewer people able and willing to undertake hands-on activity and leadership, this is a time of wonderful opportunity and challenge.

Presbytery has committed to work with its congregations, region by region, starting with the north-west area in 2017, to address the question of how congregations and Presbytery might work together to be more fully engaged in the mission of God. This is not a review process but an invitation for congregations to participate in a 'year of discernment,' engaging in facilitated conversations about strengths and opportunities to participate together in the mission of God. Timeline:

- a) Complete the discernment of the north-west region by December 2017.
- b) Implement the recommendations in conjunction with the congregations during 2018.
- c) Commence a similar discernment process in the north-east region by end 2017.
- d) It is the Presbytery's intention to continue this process in other regions over the next five years.

## **Church planting**

### **Yarrabilba**

The Queensland Government gazetted the Yarrabilba Priority Development Area (PDA) on 8 October 2010. It is located within Logan City, 20 km south of Logan Central and encompassing 2222 ha of mostly former commercial pine plantation along the southern and

western corridor of Brisbane's urban fringe. The area is bounded by the Plunkett Conservation Park, Waterford Tamborine Road and Plunkett Road. When fully developed, it will comprise 20,000 dwellings to house a population of 50,000.

Presbytery has identified this residential growth area as a priority focus for future ministry and mission. It is exploring innovative models for a church presence through partnerships with Logan Uniting Church (Springwood), Calvary Christian College, Wesley Mission Queensland and UnitingCare Queensland. The first step will be to engage a facilitator to liaise between the developers, Logan City Council and residents to discern the kind of ministry required to position the Uniting Church for effective missional engagement with this rapidly-emerging community.

Timeline:

- a) Advertising for the facilitator position to commence May 2017.
- b) An active Uniting Church presence in Yarrabilba by December 2018.

In addition the Newlife Robina church plant at Pacific Pines is now a congregation independent of its Newlife roots.

Burleigh Heads 'Village Church' is a faith community jointly established by Newlife and the Presbytery. See details under Highlights.

## Highlights since the last Synod

**Pacific Pines Uniting Church** has been meeting for several years as a campus of Newlife in Jubilee School, Pacific Pines (northern Gold Coast). In February 2017, it 'graduated' to be recognised as a congregation in its own right, called Uniting North Gold Coast. Presbytery is underwriting this next stage. Planning is advanced to restructure the Uniting Church presence to better meet the challenges in this fast-growing region.

Timeline:

- a) It is proposed that Uniting North will merge with Coomera Uniting Church at Coomera from 1 July 2017.
- b) The newly combined congregation will be financially self-sufficient by December 2018.
- c) The linked congregations of Pimpama, Coomera and Nerang (known as the Living Rivers cluster) will be separate entities from 1 July 2017, with half-time placements at Nerang and Pimpama.

**Burleigh Heads Faith Community (Village Church)** was launched in February 2017. It is establishing a new faith community aimed at young people and families based at Burleigh Heads Uniting Church under the oversight of the Presbytery through Newlife. Presbytery is providing initial funding support.

Timeline:

- a) The Village Church will be financially self-sufficient by December 2018 and ready to be recognised as a congregation.
- b) Village Church will plant another faith community elsewhere on the Gold Coast by 2020.

### **Multicultural congregation development**

As indicated above, South Moreton is the most culturally diverse of the Queensland presbyteries, comprising 11 congregations and faith communities of specific cultural origin plus several intentionally cross-cultural congregations. The placement of project officer: multicultural aims to provide oversight, support and training to these various cultural groups.

One of the most significant cross-cultural congregations is Logan Central Multicultural Uniting Church, which in 2017 is in a state of transition. Following a comprehensive consultation with the congregation in 2016, Presbytery is working to ensure resources and leadership are provided to this congregation to enable it to become a major regional church in Logan City. A property plan is being developed for the site to provide facilities for the anticipated growth.

### **Innovative mission and Fresh Expressions**

Recognising the fluidity and complexity of the wider social context of the whole church, Presbytery is giving priority to resourcing congregations for mission planning and implementation. Presbytery acknowledges the need to discover ways of investing financial, people and innovation resources to underpin new initiatives. In a time where some of the models of church which have served us well are not working, and where there are huge opportunities for mission, the church must discover the best ways to support and encourage missional behaviour by strategically applying its people, property and money.

Messy Church has been a growing edge for congregations. Presbytery holds training events and Messy Meet-ups for congregations already doing Messy Church and those who want to find out more.

Seven congregations conduct regular Messy Church events (although two don't use that name) with another three planning to start in 2017. Other congregations do a variety of creative family ministries. Encouraging and equipping churches for innovative forms of worship and outreach remains a priority area resourced by the project officer: mission. Presbytery is a partner in running the annual Mission Shaped Ministry training course.

### **Youth and children**

Twenty eight of our churches have some form of youth and children's ministry. Children's ministry breakfasts are held three times a year to encourage congregations to try new ways of connecting with and ministering to families, and to provide ministry resources. Youth group leaders are encouraged to attend Renovators leadership training (a joint initiative with south east Queensland presbyteries). There are 23 Sunday School/Kids' Life programs on Sunday, but others are exploring different ways of growing young disciples through art and children's groups. Mainly Music and other music groups have proved to be a good way to connect with new families in the local area.

## **Priority Directions**

- To be Christ-centred, at prayer, and listening
  - Eucharist begins Presbytery meetings
  - Encouraging and promoting the Jacob's Well resources
  - Ministers' annual retreat.
- Discipleship
  - 20 candidates undertaking Period of Discernment
  - Promotion of 3DM
  - Renovators youth leadership program.

- Leadership
  - Courses in lay presidency at the sacraments
  - Enrolments in IIM training and Synod Leadership Course
  - Youth and children's leadership breakfasts
  - Messy Church training.
- Connecting with communities
  - Regional discernment
  - Yarrabilba, Burleigh Heads, Northern Gold Coast priorities
  - Mission Shaped Ministry course
  - Growing connections with UnitingCare.
- Youth, children and families
  - Growth in innovative mission and Fresh Expressions
  - Leadership in Easter Madness
  - Discoveries Children's Camp and Kids' Campout
  - Presbytery's hosting of a contemporary multicultural worship event on the 5th Sunday night of each month as part of Next Gen Arise
  - The commencement of a weekly Sunday night 'Gen 2' contemporary worship service at Logan Central Multicultural congregation.

## Challenges/risks as we progress

The Presbytery reported to the previous Synod with regard to our congregations: 11 growing, 12 stable, 19 declining. We are of the view that this is still the case. For those congregations in decline, however, the situation is becoming increasingly serious.

- The Presbytery is examining carefully the financial capacity of congregations when they complete a profile seeking to call a ministry agent.
- An increasing number of congregations will not be able to afford a full-time agent.
- Mission and Service fund expectations are increasingly difficult to meet. The process for Mission and Service Fund payments is under restructure.
- The regional discernment program described above aims to systematically examine the Presbytery's resources and possibilities region by region.
- Newlife Robina continues to grow in membership and influence. A positive partnering relationship has developed between Newlife and the Presbytery. This has resulted in the church plant in the northern Gold Coast becoming a congregation and reinvigorating that region. In 2017 a church plant established as a faith community commenced in Burleigh Heads, complementing the existing congregation.
- South Moreton serves one of the fastest growing population areas in the Synod. Planting ministry in Yarrabilba will be a costly exercise (as are the other church plants) with no guarantees of success. We are called however to risk the way of Jesus.

## For consideration

The Presbytery acknowledges with thanks the giftedness and dedication of Presbytery staff; Rev Beth Nicholls – project officer: mission, Pastor David Busch – project officer: multi-cultural, Bruce Mullan – mission resource committee support officer.

Presbytery also acknowledges the outstanding contribution which Heather Dansie made as the office administrator for eight years. Heather brought great organisational skill, clear thinking, calm efficiency, warm personality, generous spirit and infectious humour to this role

as it has changed and grown over the years. Presbytery is deeply grateful to Heather, and thankful for Michele Cochrane who has ably stepped into this role since late-2016. In November the Rev Dr David MacKay Rankin will complete his extended term as chairperson. He has offered strong leadership, wise judgement and given generously of his time.

The Rev Alan Robinson, Presbytery Minister, will retire at the end of December 2017. Alan has been for us a Presbytery Minister with a great heart, both pastoral and missional (and in countless other ways) for the work of the Kingdom. He has a passion for the Gospel and has been in this work a wonderful servant of his Lord and most gracious and thoughtful colleague. The Presbytery anticipates a major change in leadership for 2018.

## Proposal

It is proposed that the 33rd Synod receive this report.

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### Contact for report questions:

Name: Rev Alan Robinson  
Position: Presbytery Minister of South Moreton  
Email: [smpresmin@gmail.com](mailto:smpresmin@gmail.com) Phone: 07 3807 7421





#realunitingchurch

## Report from **Presbytery of The Downs**

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### Context

The extensive area which is the focus for mission and ministry for congregations and Uniting Church in Australia agencies in the Presbytery of The Downs incorporates large provincial towns, small towns and rural communities.

Large sparsely populated areas, characterised as 'remote', are serviced by two patrol ministries; Leichhardt Patrol and Cunnamulla-Burke and Wills Patrol.

Many communities are responding to patterns of population decline, large-scale changes in agricultural business and the relatively recent impact of the mining industry developing in the Surat Basin.

# Priority Directions

Following the 32nd Synod, the Presbytery of The Downs has intentionally focussed on developing a stronger and more corporate understanding of mission within its bounds.

This approach has incorporated elements of the five Synod Priority Directions particularly in the areas of leadership and Christ-centeredness.

## Report

The question that confronts the Presbytery is how does a Presbytery of 22 identifiable congregations/clusters with 35 worshipping congregations, two patrol ministries, two Blue Care chaplains, one hospital chaplain and one school chaplain promote ministry and mission within its somewhat flexible boundaries.

The Presbytery's response was to form a mission task group in late 2016 with the purpose of identifying the missional priorities of Presbytery in the short to medium term. To assist in initiating this process, a two-day workshop was held in February this year with members of the task group, Standing Committee and the Pastoral Relations Committee to brainstorm some possibilities. These two days along with the work of Carolyn Kitto have formed the basis for the task group. Their work is anticipated to come to fruition shortly with any proposals being put to the November Presbytery meeting for consideration.

A major step to date has been the significant resourcing undertaken by the Presbytery for Highfields Community Church. This is an exciting church plant now numbering upwards of 180 people, seeking a ministry base to operate from in the future. Without the legacy of significant historical financial resources and existing buildings which can be sold to finance a community centre, church plants such as Highfields (as well as many of the church plants in new developments across this state) will struggle in mission.

In late 2016 the Presbytery purchased from Frontier Services the building complex at Birdsville. This will provide the patrol minister with a base to work from and to maintain ministry in the Diamantina Shire. The purchase also retains the building for the whole of the church as it has considerable historical significance in that it was one of the initial places where John Flynn established a presence.

As in other rural presbyteries, the impact of rural decline and depopulation is affecting the capacity of local congregations to sustain ministry and to maintain existing facilities. The Presbytery has shown generosity and commitment in supporting the mission work of other congregations in the past.

We are particularly grateful for project funding from Synod budgets which has assisted our support now and in the past.

The extent of need in rural and small congregations and the decreasing resource base across the Presbytery means a future in which we will have limited capacity to meet these needs solely from our own resources.

# Challenges/risks as we progress

## **Maintaining a Uniting Church identity in existing small congregations**

Increasingly, the Presbytery is finding that those who attend represent diverse denominational experiences. For example, in a small congregation within the Presbytery of 20 attenders, seven have previous denominational affiliations! In these congregations enthusiastic, newly arrived Christians with leadership ambitions have little connection with the ethos and theological alignment of the Uniting Church in Australia. The challenge for us is to continue to support and develop these new leaders and at the same time enable them to embrace the Uniting Church ethos.

## **Maintaining a Uniting Church presence in key locations**

In remote locations and rural towns, the local capacity to support fully stipended ministry is diminishing to a point where external support needs to be considered. The challenge is for the Presbytery, in consultation with Synod, to determine which locations are critical for the Uniting Church to maintain an ongoing presence.

Ecumenical cooperation is a valid option; the key issue is that the desire for this to occur locally is not necessarily reflected in the centres of decision-making in the churches.

## **Cultural change/missional change**

Presbytery consultations are identifying the need for congregations to establish new ways of engaging with their community.

Other congregations attempting to sustain their proud community connections of the past are becoming increasingly aware of the limitations of an aging membership.

Those congregations that continue to seek a 'comfortable' option of self-focussed ministry with the ministry agent primarily providing care to them, are unlikely to have a viable future.

The challenge for the Presbytery is to equip current and future ministry agents with the skills to engage and lead congregations in finding fresh ways of witness, worship and service in and with their wider community. This means cultural change in the expectations of Christian community and a willingness to release the ministry agent to explore further mission opportunities.

# Proposal

It is proposed that the 33rd Synod receive this report.

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## **Contact for report questions:**

Name: Rev John Case  
Position: Secretary, Presbytery of The Downs  
Email: [tdpresb.sec@gmail.com](mailto:tdpresb.sec@gmail.com) Phone: 0417 956 997



# #realunitingchurch

Report from

## Presbytery Demographics and Finances

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### Context

A range of financial demographic and information has been prepared for each presbytery. The information is provided in a comparative format rather than individual reports.

Presbytery financial information in line with that presented to the 32<sup>nd</sup> Synod is reproduced in Table 1 along with comparative data for 2016.

Further information based on the 2016 congregational returns has also been prepared. A summary of the numerical information is provided in Table 2. This data has then been analysed to provide further information to assist presbyteries to understand various aspects of their demographical and financial profiles. The analysis is presented via a series of graphs. Given that presbyteries vary considerably in size, both geographically and by population, these graphs are predominantly presented in proportionate terms to enable a more meaningful comparison. When reviewing this information, please note that much of the information has been sourced from congregational returns. Not all congregations provide returns and in addition, not all returns contain all information requested. Calvary presbytery could not be included in this section of the report due to the fact that its presbytery boundaries are not clearly delineated and return rates were too low.

**Table 1: Presbytery Finances**

	Bremer Brisbane		Mary Burnett		Moreton Rivers		South Moreton	
	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016
<b>Figures as at 30 June (Financial Year)</b>								
Mission & Service Fund Contribution (Actual)	446,322	457,103	341,181	347,352	887,887	857,316	1,004,959	1,034,010
Presbytery Operational Funding (Actual)	151,470		131,000	133,882	143,964	147,131	168,140	171,839
Strategic Project Funding (Actual)	132,887	238,683	61,350	60,791	121,251	140,000	203,517	230,778
Funds Held in Reserve	4,544,873	4,794,147	6,829,752	7,675,024	14,916,918	14,813,473	8,093,068	7,933,001
<b>Figures as at 31 December (Calendar Year)</b>								
% Congregations with at least 80% income from offerings	16%	15%	5%	14%	14%	18%	20%	20%
Income from Other Sources (non MSF)	558,561	586,674	275,974	339,623	2,616,928	818,485	1,352,823	1,179,499
No. of Congregations & Faith Communities	31	33	22	23	37	38	41	41

	Calvary Presbytery		Central Queensland		North Queensland		The Downs	
	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016
<b>Figures as at 30 June (Financial Year)</b>								
Mission & Service Fund Contribution	0	0	273,974	274,258	179,230	179,088	178,575	182,823
Presbytery Operational Funding	146,478	149,701	153,048	156,057	200,000	204,400	153,959	157,798
Strategic Project Funding Allocated	369,035	441,737	61,013	58,697	268,545	308,110	162,635	220,885
Funds Held in Reserve	19,937	20,223	1,465,523	1,499,827	1,441,536	1,363,486	5,183,912	4,108,331
<b>Figures as at 31 December (Calendar Year)</b>								
% Congregations with at least 80% income from offerings			30%	30%	22%	21%	10%	14%
Income from Other Sources (non MSF)			393,218	196,464	220,724	216,262	129,831	150,882
No. of Congregations & Faith Communities	7	7	23	23	27	28	20	21

Notes:

Some 2015 figures may differ from reporting at 32nd Synod where calendar year figures were used

Financial year figures are drawn from Synod Office Accounting system

Calendar year figures are drawn from Congregational returns

Presbyteries have been grouped in size on the basis of MSF Contributions

**Table 2: Key Demographic and Financial Data from 2016 Congregational Returns**

2016 Information	Synod	Bremer Brisbane	Central Qld	Mary Burnett	Moreton Rivers	North Qld	South Moreton	The Downs
Size (km <sup>2</sup> )		9,129	291,114	56,097	4,638	680,989	5,667	686,715
Population	4,736,941	492,907	379,379	640,439	941,979	535,395	1,471,129	267,293
Religious Affiliation with Uniting Church	239,645	24,954	27,226	41,039	41,242	26,816	62,330	15,757
Proportion of Congregations Contributing	86%	91%	78%	96%	100%	86%	88%	76%
No of Congregations who Returned	185	30	18	22	38	24	36	16
Worship Attendance	12,849	1,726	607	1,924	2,342	1,276	4,137	837
<b>Income</b>								
General Offerings	\$17,317,623	\$2,616,975	\$1,037,634	\$1,970,513	\$3,578,644	\$1,572,363	\$5,375,310	\$1,160,833
Other Ministry & Mission Income	\$1,751,728	\$390,152	\$108,170	\$301,934	\$226,101	\$208,292	\$402,905	\$114,174
Interest Income	\$488,677	\$67,050	\$30,857	\$74,799	\$117,818	\$11,134	\$126,535	\$60,478
Property Income	\$4,062,598	\$667,577	\$217,107	\$488,319	\$1,286,689	\$222,375	\$983,175	\$196,955
Other Income	\$2,977,150	\$389,488	\$226,728	\$225,426	\$893,956	\$280,352	\$817,542	\$143,659
Income Generating Activities	\$1,831,424	\$364,243	\$33,818	\$65,750	\$415,702	\$73,129	\$826,842	\$51,939
Total Income	\$28,429,200	\$4,495,485	\$1,654,314	\$3,126,741	\$6,518,910	\$2,367,646	\$8,532,308	\$1,728,039
<b>Expenses</b>								
Staff Costs	\$14,469,916	\$2,271,331	\$801,175	\$1,803,099	\$3,180,128	\$1,315,080	\$4,163,509	\$935,595
Property Costs	\$5,395,459	\$885,541	\$375,968	\$604,031	\$1,170,893	\$497,562	\$1,575,501	\$281,328
Mission Costs	\$4,634,031	\$600,909	\$430,420	\$497,833	\$1,192,047	\$272,222	\$1,337,089	\$303,312
Administration Costs	\$1,328,163	\$153,786	\$58,131	\$155,960	\$319,855	\$93,029	\$488,079	\$54,962
Worship/Congregation Costs	\$968,553	\$116,672	\$41,423	\$39,809	\$220,158	\$97,875	\$403,537	\$48,983
Income Generating Costs	\$739,615	\$123,832	\$2,150	\$2,224	\$229,636	\$35,490	\$342,881	\$3,401
Total Costs	\$27,535,737	\$4,152,072	\$1,709,267	\$3,102,955	\$6,312,716	\$2,311,258	\$8,310,597	\$1,627,581
Surplus/Deficit	\$893,463	\$343,413	-\$54,953	\$23,786	\$206,194	\$56,388	\$221,711	\$100,459
Net Capital Transactions	-\$1,067,133	\$338,615	-\$83,374	\$427,352	-\$1,108,984	-\$68,831	-\$496,348	-\$75,564
Loans/Funds Ratio	9.83%	18.61%	6.94%	0.78%	3.30%	0.23%	25.05%	0.00%
Net Funds (Investments - Loans)	\$30,144,512	\$4,204,618	\$1,150,567	\$4,961,164	\$9,508,183	\$1,488,107	\$5,601,187	\$3,224,492
Mission & Service Fund Contributions	\$5,096,087	\$781,762	\$291,570	\$557,424	\$1,140,085	\$430,277	\$1,470,562	\$315,432

Notes:

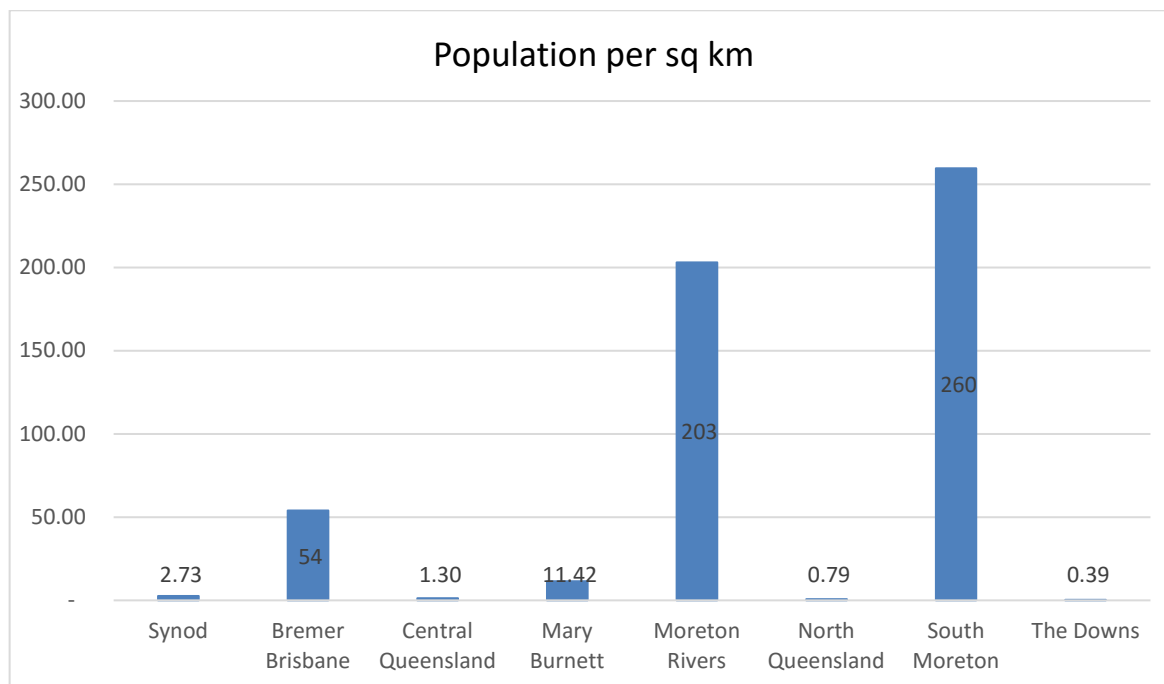
Size obtained from GIS mapping of Presbytery boundaries along ABS statistical areas

Population obtained from 2016 ABS data aligned with mapping boundaries

Financial and attendance data obtained from congregational returns as at 31 December 2016

Descriptors are located in Table 2 at the end of the report

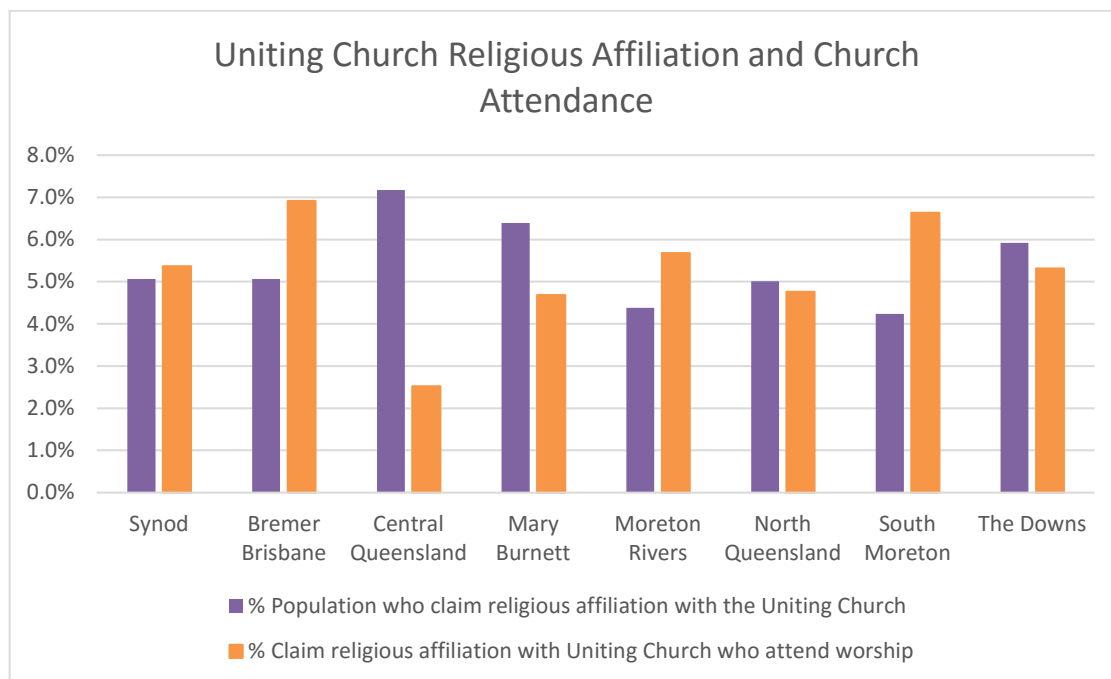
**Figure 1: Population per sq km 2016**



**Notes:**

Based on 2016 ABS population data aligned with Presbytery mapped boundaries divided by the GIS based areas of presbyteries based on those boundaries

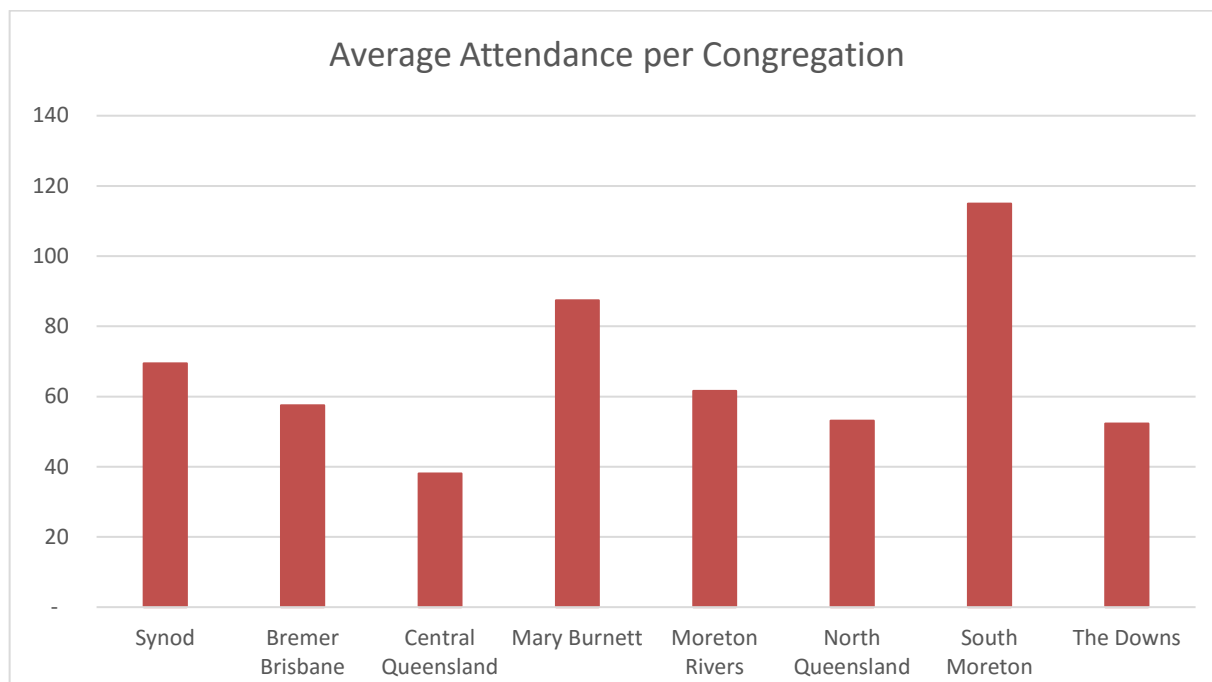
**Figure 2: Religious Affiliation and Church Attendance 2016**



**Notes:**

Based on 2016 ABS population data aligned with Presbytery mapped boundaries and ABS Religious Affiliation  
 Based on the total average attendance figures provided by congregations who provided returns, noting that not all returns included attendance figures

**Figure 3: Average Attendance per Congregation 2016**

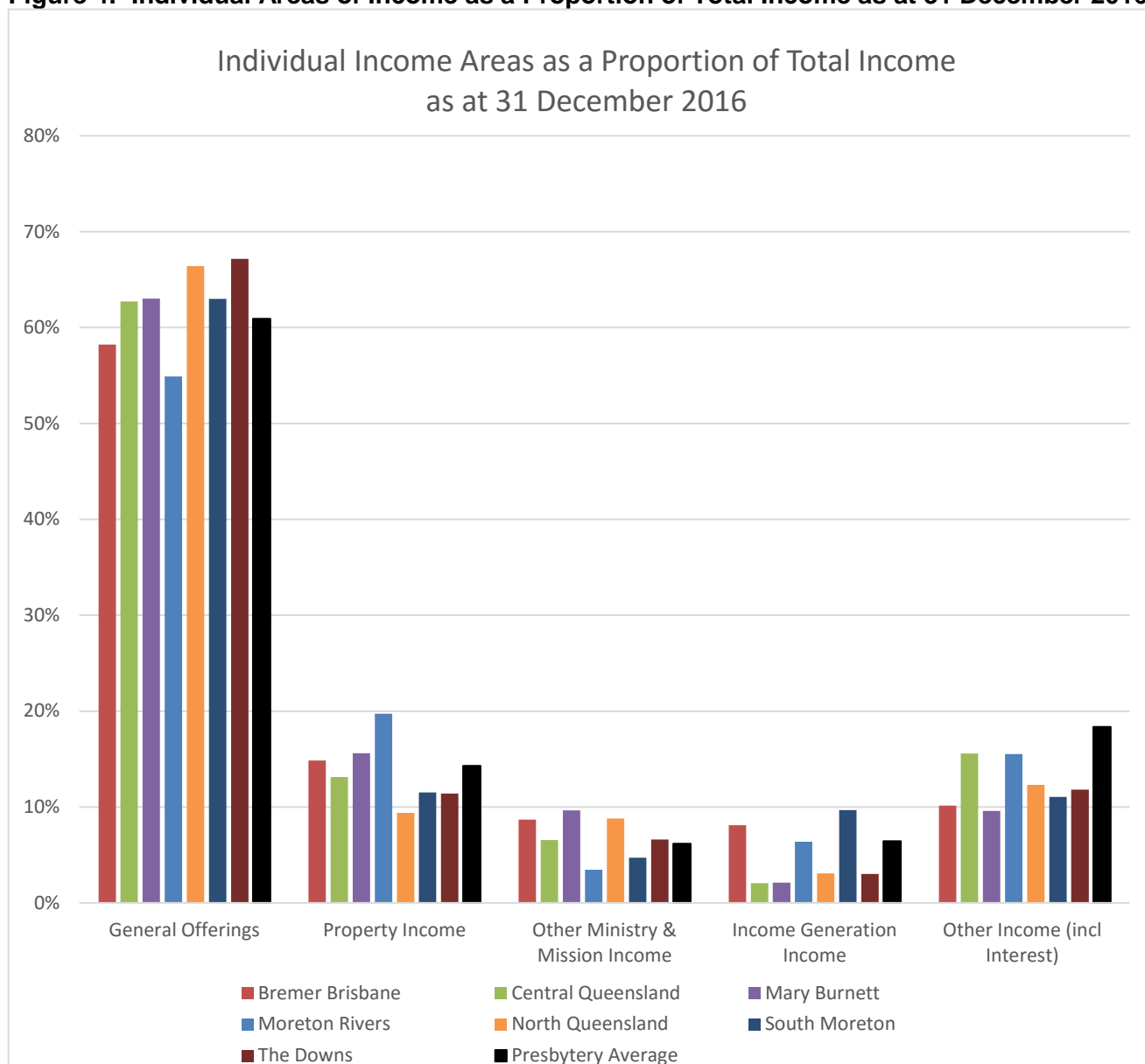


**Notes:**

Based on the number of congregations who provided returns and on the total average attendance figures provided in these returns, noting that not all returns included attendance figures



**Figure 4: Individual Areas of Income as a Proportion of Total Income as at 31 December 2016**



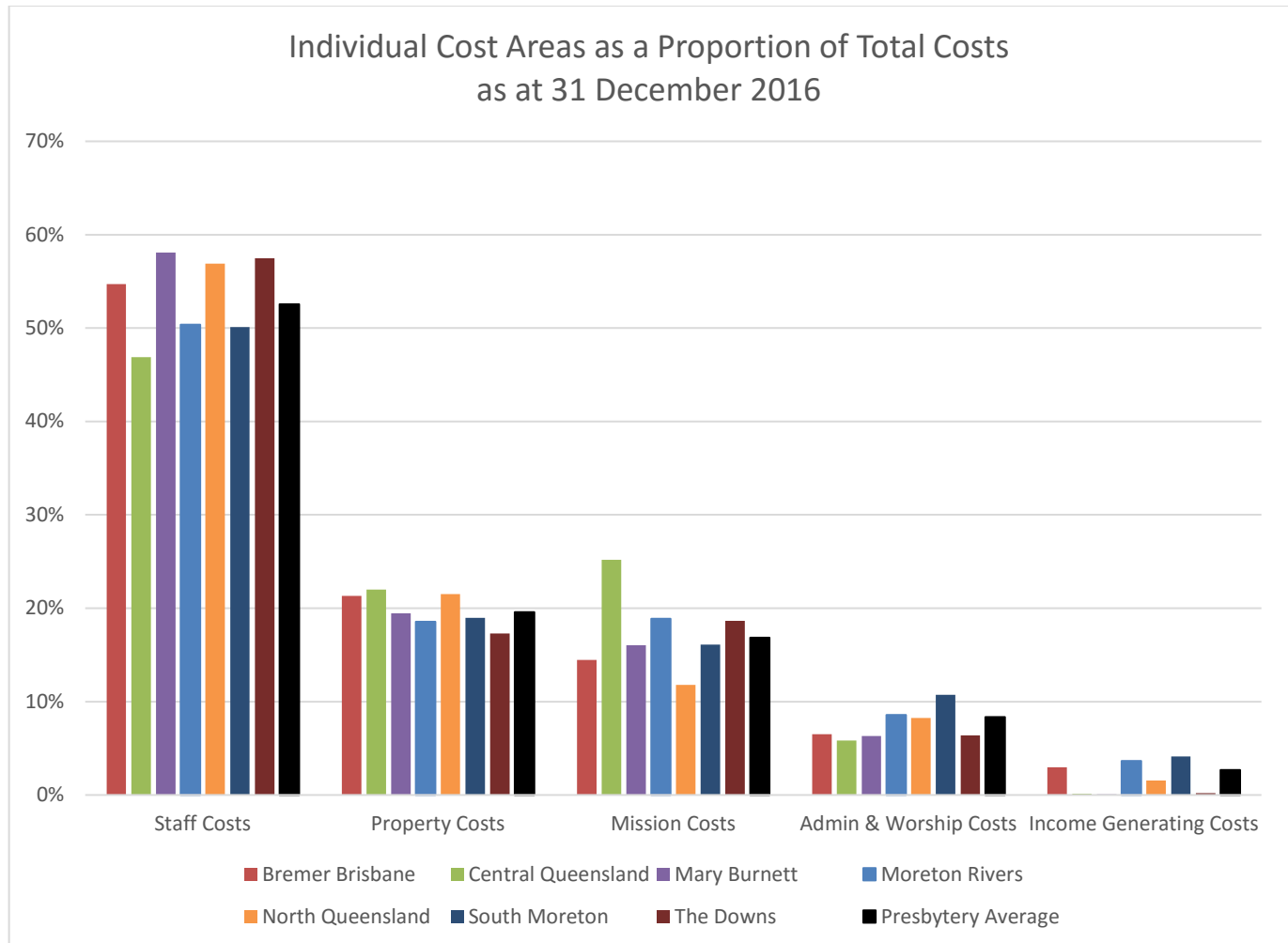
**Notes:**

Based on congregations who provided returns and the figures provided in these returns  
 General Offerings has been separated from Ministry and Mission Income Interest income is generally too small to be measured separately and has been combined with Other Income

**Table 1: Presbytery Finances**

Further descriptions of inclusions are included in Table 2 at the end of the report

**Figure 5: Individual Areas of Cost as a Proportion of Total Costs as at 31 December 2016**



**Notes:**

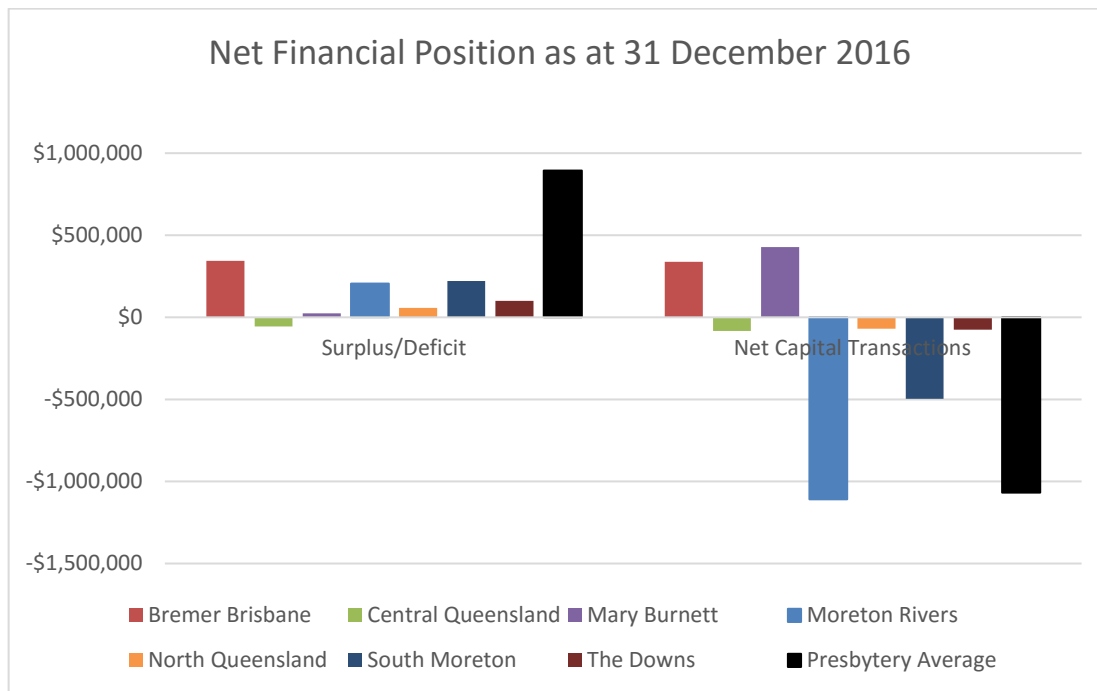
Based on congregations who provided returns and the figures provided in these returns

Property Costs may relate both to investment properties and church properties

Administration and Worship costs have been combined as both are too small to measure separately

Further descriptions of inclusions are included in Table 2 at the end of the report

**Figure 6: Figures to Demonstrate Net Financial Position as at 31 December 2016**



**Notes:**

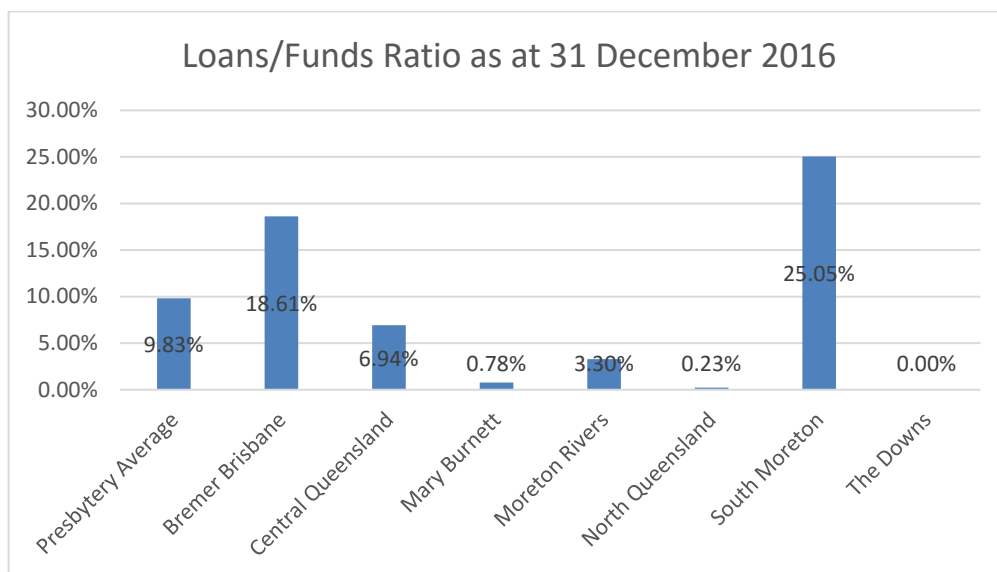
Based on congregations who provided returns and the figures provided in these returns

Surplus Deficit is as represented in the returns and consists of Receipts less Payments

Net Capital Transactions is as represented in the returns and consists of Capital Cash Receipts less Capital Cash Payments

Further descriptions of inclusions are included in Table 2 at the end of the report

**Figure 7: Comparison of Funds and Loans as at 31 December 2016**



**Notes:**

Based on congregations who provided returns and the figures provided in these returns

The calculation is based on Total Loans as a proportion of (divided by) Total Funds

Further descriptions of inclusions are included in Table 2 at the end of the report

**Table 3: Financial Explanatory Notes**

Funds Held in Reserve	Funds 'at call' or on term deposits with UCIS • MDF investments Mutual Support Scheme funds owned by the presbytery/congregation (not members)	Presbytery Operational Funding	The amount agreed to be paid from the MSF to Presbyteries for the Presbytery to operate (ie cover Pres Min stipend, admin staff, office costs, travel etc)
Mission and Service Fund Contribution	The amount each presbytery agreed to contribute towards the Mission and Service Fund (MSF)	Income from other sources (Non MSF)	Retiring offerings / appeals for nonc-ongregation causes • Retiring offerings / appeals for congregation causes • Income from UCA organisations – Synod/Presbytery grants • Government grants • Bequests received • Special Purpose Fund income • Transfer from MDF account
Strategic Project Funding	The total allocated from the MSF (not UC Foundation) to cover agreed costs of: • Strategic Projects • Particular Function • In Solidarity		
Other Ministry & Mission Income	Retiring offerings/appeals for congregational and non congregational causes Income from UCA organisations Government Grants Donations from non UCA sources Reimbursement for Ministerial Services	Staff Costs	Ministerial stipends, housing and travel allowances Lay staff salaries, wages & superannuation Other employment related expenses Reimbursement and out of pocket expenses Reimbursement for shared ministry costs
Interest Income	Interest Income from UCIS, other financial institutions Interest or drawdowns from MDF Accounts Distributions from other UCA accounts	Property Costs	Consultants, contractors & Property management Rent, electricity and gas Repairs, maintenance and insurance, rates and taxes
Property Income	Property Income from manse Other Property Income	Mission Costs	Contributions to UCA or other UCA Organisations Donations to non UCA Organisations Local and overseas mission support Mission Education Fundraising costs
Other Income	Bequest Received Special purpose fund income Receipts for congregational sub-entities Transfer from MDF account Other receipts	Administration Costs	Audit, accounting, legal or other professional fees Bank Charges Motor vehicle expenses Non property related insurance Interest expenses on borrowings Stationery, printing, telecommunication, postage, couriers and other miscellaneous office costs
Income Generating Activities	Business or other activities that generate income	Worship/Congregation Costs	Congregational sub entities Congregation life and meetings and worship costs Congregation Members training and conferences
<b>Capital Cash Receipts</b>	Proceeds from sale of land or buildings Proceeds from sale of other assets Draw down of Property Loan	Funds	UCIS Cash Management, Fixed Term Investments or Mutual Support Scheme Accounts with other Financial Institutions Special Purpose Funds UC Foundation Mission Development Fund
<b>Capital Cash Payments</b>	Purchase of land or buildings or other assets Refurbishment or redevelopment of property Contribution to Future Development Fund Agents commissions Loan repayments	Loans	UCIS Loans Other Synod Loans Loans from other financial institutions

## Contact for report questions:

Name: Helen Harris

Position: Program Manager

Email: [helen.harris@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:helen.harris@ucaqld.com.au) Phone: 3377 9716



# #realunitingchurch

## Report from **Schools and Residential Colleges Commission**

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### Context

*Together on the Way, Enriching Community 2016* acts as the foundational and overarching document upon which we have established our vision, purpose, focus and values as the Schools and Residential Colleges Commission.

### Purpose

The commission is to lead and support the work of the Uniting Church in Australia affiliated schools and residential colleges to ensure that the Queensland Synod's responsibilities in relation to schools and residential colleges, under Uniting Church regulations, are fulfilled.

Across this portfolio, the commission's goals are:

- To strengthen:
  - governance
  - relationships among affiliates
  - the emphasis on Christian mission.
- To support the learning and training networks of boards, executive staff and chaplains.

## Metrics

The commission, meeting at least six times a year, consists of a chairperson and six members appointed by Synod Standing Committee with the general secretary or their nominee as an ex officio member. To fulfil its obligations it is assisted by a full-time executive officer and 0.4FTE executive assistant.

	Category	Number	Boards	Uniting Church appointed board members	Students
Schools	Trust schools	4	4	36	2342
	Letters Patent	2	1	6	1584
	PMSA	4	1	6	4856
	Ecumenical schools	3	0	0	3370
School totals		13	6	48	12152
Residential colleges		6	5	72	1438
TOTALS		19	11	120	13590

## Highlights

1. Over a period of 10 months, sharply reacting to the consequences of hearings in the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse:
  - a. to ensure Shalom Christian College (SCC) compliance with boarding and well-being regulations of the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board (NSSAB)
  - b. to monitor the implementation of recommendations from NSSAB and Boarding Australia Reviews at SCC, and
  - c. to secure collaboration with the State Department of Education and Training in progressing better learning outcomes and boarding processes at SCC.
2. Concerning the 11 boards and councils with 120 members:
  - a. filling vacancies by interviewing, assessing and, if criteria are met, appointing new and continuing members to the boards of schools and residential colleges
  - b. monitoring the operations of the 11 boards through advice and instruction.
3. Finalised:
  - a. A Safe Schools statement and framework that includes an audit tool for Uniting Church schools.
  - b. Progressed the Religious Education in Uniting Church Schools Framework for roll-out in 2018.

# Religious Education in Uniting Church Schools – The Framework

*The Framework* is the vehicle through which students in UCA schools are introduced and experience a Christian faith perspective so as to:

- participate in society leading creative and compassionate lives,
- values living within the faith and unity of the broader church
- be a part of God’s mission of reconciling and renewing the whole of creation.

The Schools & Residential Colleges Commission, in collaboration with Trinity Theological College led the development of the *Religious Education in Uniting Church Schools – The Framework*. *The Framework* aims to provide a basis for fostering, in our schools, Christ-centred cultures grounded in gospel values. Delivering religious education through *The Framework* will assist staff and students to connect to the mission of Christ in our schools.

Rather than dictating matters of content, *The Framework* sets out a range of undergirding convictions—a theology of education—for the teaching of religious education. *The Framework* establishes explicit baseline expectations for education about the Christian faith which can be expected from UCA schools. As such, it is primarily addressed to teachers of religious education, chaplains and school governors, although it also will be relevant to parents and other interested parties.

Jesus said, “Let the children come to me, and do not stop them, for it is to such as these that the Kingdom of God belongs.” Mark 10:14

The Queensland Synod of the Uniting Church in Australia takes seriously its responsibility to provide avenues for children and young people to encounter the life of the Kingdom of God, as revealed in Jesus Christ.

This RE Framework will offer schools a means by which the riches of the Christian story, as particularly expressed through the Uniting Church, can be accessed by young people. In the midst of the great transitions that western civilisation is now immersed, an understanding of how the Christian tradition can inform and resource our journey is a vital element of the church’s participation in the education of young people.

As young people explore who they are, their world and what their role in it might be, the Church’s prayer is that they might be encouraged and given hope and purpose by encountering the God revealed in the Church’s witness.



# Priority Directions

The intent of the commission:

- To meet the accountability requirements of the Uniting Church in Australia By-laws and to align its strategic posture and commitment with the priorities of the 32rd Synod, namely,
  - Serving youth, children and families.
  - Engaging in intentional, open connections and partnerships with communities.
  - Building viable, sustainable leadership, governance and management structures and protocols.
  - Fostering Christ-centred cultures grounded in gospel values.
  - Connecting students through a revised RE curriculum and service learning programs.
- To advance the priorities and enact the Uniting Church in Australia By-laws. A new Directions Paper for 2016–2018 was formulated by the commission in October 2016 and determined the priority actions as:
  - Strengthening lines of accountability and reporting between schools and colleges and the Uniting Church in Australia.
  - Creating strategic opportunities and directions for the Uniting Church in terms of the provision of resources, services and support by the executive officer.
  - Establishing biannual events and networking opportunities for Uniting Church board appointees, school principals and college heads.
  - Continuing to embed the Queensland Ethos Statement into the culture and operations of Uniting Church schools and colleges.
  - Maintaining rigorous recruitment, selection and appointment processes for vacancies on affiliated boards and councils.
  - Reviewing and approving resources, policy and governance documents to support the work of Uniting Church boards, councils and executive.
  - Developing greater connection between the commission and the associated agencies by encouraging commission members to also serve on schools and college boards.

## Report

### **Key outcomes Priority Direction 1: Serving youth, children and families.**

- Develop a Uniting Church in Australia Safe Schools statement and audit tool to assist compliance with National Safe Schools Framework (NSSF). Throughout 2017 the commission has also updated the Child Protection Policy and Procedures for all Property Trust (Q.) schools and the executive officer attended the No More Harm Conference.
  - The Royal Commission National Task Group (RCNTG) commissioned a review of the Child Safe Framework following the release of the Key Elements of Child Safe Organisations in 2016.
  - The commission oversaw the production of a self-assessment tool for schools and colleges. RCNTG executive officer and the commission executive officer released this document, aligning the Uniting Church Child Safe Framework with key elements of the Child Safe Organisations document as part of a Safe Schools Professional Development session in June 2017 at the Synod office.
  - NSSAB requested a consistency in the wording in the policies of the four Uniting Church Property Trust (Q.) Schools. With the exception of wording over the delegation of governance, this was finalised in June 2017.

- Ensure SCC compliance with boarding and well-being regulations from the Non-State School Accreditation Board (NSSAB) criteria:
  - Following the November 2016 hearing at the Royal Commission, the NSSAB determined to make changes to a number of clauses in the Shalom Christian College Child Protection Policy. These have all been addressed and the updated policy has been approved by NSSAB.
  - The focus of the executive officer's work at SCC during the first half of 2017 achieved the following outcomes:
    - Finalising the memorandum of understanding between SCC and Townsville Aboriginal and Indigenous Health Service (TAIHS).
    - Developing a compliant child protection policy and associated procedures for the college.
    - Developing a process to ensure those dealing with the health and well-being of students at the college and in the boarding environment have or are in the process of gaining the necessary certifications/qualifications.
    - Confirming a set of identifiable procedures and policies through which the health and well-being of students can be attended to, and clearly facilitated associated reporting.
    - Investigating the suitability of local candidates as potential board members by assessing the board's present skills matrix.
    - Assisting the senior management team to develop strategies to lead and communicate the required changes in response to the NSSAB review and the Boarding Australia's review (including changes to improve the well-being and safety of students, staff and the senior management team).
    - Quantifying the capacity of the senior leadership team to undertake future necessary changes recommended.
  - NSSAB assessors revisited the college in May 2017 to further assess the level of compliance with the identified accreditation criteria.
    - They were satisfied that the college is compliant with the criteria for the health, safety and conduct of staff and students as outlined in section 10 of the *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001*.
    - They understand further work is to be carried out to improve the facilities to enable wardrobe, storage and study arrangements for boarding students.
    - They will make a short visit to the college in the latter part of 2017 to monitor the facilities, staffing and implementation of improvement processes for the boarding provision and provide a report to assist the board to determine whether the college is compliant with the accreditation criteria.
- Completed a recruitment and selection process in October 2016 to replace the previous executive officer of the commission with Mark Bensley who commenced duties in January 2017.
- Awarded two Uniting Church bursaries associated with the Indigenous Learning Pathways Grant initiative. This project is now closed.
- Provided advice and support regarding building applications to Block Grant Authority (BGA).
  - The Uniting Church has provided a letter of support for a building application for The Lakes College (TLC) through BGA.
  - The executive officer is working on a paper for the FIP Board in relation to establishing a long-term and sustainable finance strategy that will position TLC as financially independent and to develop a finance framework to give Synod strategic and financial monitoring over the four Property Trust (Q.) schools.

## **Key outcomes Priority Direction 2: Engaging in intentional, open connections and partnerships with communities.**

- Opening connections to senior officers of the State Department of Education and Training (DET).
  - The chairperson and executive officer of the commission attended a meeting with the Deputy-Director General of Education in April 2017 to request special funding, to seek the development of partnerships between EQ schools and SCC and to clarify the legal relationship between Synod and the four Property Trust schools. This resulted in productive discussions with the Assistant-Director General of Education – Indigenous Education in July 2017. The key outcomes being:
    - Staff at Shalom are able to connect to all available resources of DET.
    - Local Assistant Regional Director to meet regularly with the principal of SCC to have conversations around teaching and learning and school improvement.
    - Access to the two academies of Transition Support Services namely, Clontarf Academy for boys and Stars Academy for girls.
- Commencing conversations with Federal Minister Simon Birmingham’s office.
  - While attending the Christian Schools Policy Forum in Canberra in May 2017, the executive officer established a connection and enjoyed a conversation with Education Minister Birmingham. Following the release of the findings from the SCC Business Renewal Strategy (see below) Minister Birmingham will be sent a briefing note similar to that used with officers of the State Department of Education and Training.
- Residential colleges
  - Grace College Council adopted its new constitution at its May 2017 meeting after it received endorsement by Uniting Church in Australia, Presbyterian Church of Queensland (PCQ) and University of Queensland Senate (UQS).
  - Emmanuel College is seeking endorsement from Uniting Church in Australia and PCQ for a new constitution. Highlights of the proposed changes include:
    - updating governance in accord with ACNC<sup>1</sup> and ASIC<sup>2</sup> requirements and ‘Board’ operating procedures
    - reducing the number of board councillor positions (noting that in doing so proportional representation, such as that of the Uniting Church and PCQ, will stay the same)
    - provisioning for a more professional/skills-based board.

## **Key outcomes Priority Direction 3: Building viable, sustainable leadership, governance and management structures and protocols.**

- The commission commissioned Independent Schools of Queensland (ISQ) to run a governance training and induction program with the SCC Board and senior executive staff to re-position board members on a ‘governance’ trajectory.
- Shortlisting, interviewing and recommending to the Synod Standing Committee the appointment of more than 27 applicants to governing bodies of schools and residential colleges.
- Appointed a new executive assistant to the commission in May 2017.
- Providing inputs to the Business Renewal Strategy for SCC initiated by the Synod Standing Committee in February 2017.

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Charities and Not-for profit Commission

<sup>2</sup> Australian Securities and Investment Corporation

- Continued roll-out of the Risk Management Framework (RMF).
  - Over the next six months the commission will use the RMF to address two clauses in the new By-laws, namely:
    - Review and assess the risks facing Uniting Church schools and colleges and ensure that techniques, procedures and controls are put in place to eliminate or mitigate any adverse effects on the church or its schools and colleges.
    - To provide advice to the Synod about the risks facing Uniting Church schools and colleges, including their potential impact on the Synod.
- Presbyterian and Methodist Schools Association (PMSA):
  - Work needs to continue on the new PMSA Constitution; work commenced in 2015-2016. A draft was prepared, representatives from PMSA, the Presbyterians, and the Uniting Church met a number of times to deal with it. Issues for continued discussion include:
    - Developing the purpose of Christian schools
    - Dealing with conflicts of interest
    - Dealing with limits to terms of appointment
    - Resolving capacity of the churches to initiate changes to the constitution.

**Key outcomes Priority Direction 4: Fostering Christ-centred cultures grounded in gospel values and Direction 5: Connecting students through a revised RE curriculum and service learning programs.**

- The final draft of the RE in Uniting Church Schools Framework was released to principals, board chairpersons and chaplains in all Uniting Church-affiliated schools in April 2017 as a pre-publication document. This included a request for feedback about the delivery of curriculum, especially how it fits into an already crowded curriculum and the implications on staffing and resources at a school level.
  - Following this feedback the framework was updated and after confirmation of some copyright issues (authorship and intellectual property), the framework will be officially launched at the Synod Office in September.
  - Staff from Trinity College Queensland are working in partnership with executive officers from the Chaplaincy Commission and Schools Commission and staff at Property Trust Schools to provide appropriate training in this new framework.
- To ensure the achievement of the strategic intent of the Uniting Church in Australia, key accountabilities (faith formation and religious literacy) have been written into principal employment contracts:
  - Across the college, ensure the development of Christian faith formation and religious literacy is aligned with Uniting Church theology by encouraging teachers and enabling students:
    - a) to learn about faith through the Religious Education in Uniting Church Schools Framework
    - b) to express faith through worship, witness and service.
  - Resource faith formation and religious literacy in the college by:
    - a) setting aside, outside chapel, class time of at least 30 minutes per week for the delivery of religious education through stand-alone or integrated units of study in accordance with the Religious Education in Uniting Church Schools Framework.
    - b) in addition to any funding received from government sources for the provision of chaplaincy services, the college will fund the position of a chaplain by at least 0.5 FTE to aid in the formation and expression of faith across the college.

## Future short-range goals

- By January 2018 create a New Directions Paper 2018-2019 for the commission:
  - Following the 32nd Synod members of the commission used the priority directions for 2016–2020 to create its Directions Paper for 2016-17.
  - Following the 33rd Synod and prior to the commencement of 2018, members of the commission will use the newly revised Uniting Church By-laws and policy and the newly-developed 2022 Vision and Strategy to create its Directions Paper for 2018-19.
- By January 2018 formulate the 2020 Strategy for Uniting Church schools:
  - This piece of work is being driven by contemporary issues and seeks to answer important strategic questions such as: Why do we invest in schools and colleges? Should we be expanding or contracting this segment of our mission? What new possibilities exist for the church to further its mission?

## Challenges/risks as we progress

Risks associated with the Schools and Residential Colleges Commission	
Risk category	Aspects
<p><b>Compliance risks</b></p> <p>Likelihood: low Severity: high Importance: high</p>	<p>Compliance and accountability, legislation, regulation and policy, legal. For example, non-compliant schools operations and procedures under the NSSAB Act.</p> <p>School closure, high cost of meeting compliance requirements.</p>
<p><b>Financial risks</b></p> <p>Likelihood: medium Severity: high Importance: high</p>	<p>Budget and financial performance reporting.</p> <p>Financial strategy and policy, financial sustainability (long-term financial planning).</p> <p>Grants management, procurement planning, sourcing, contract management, purchasing.</p> <p>Payroll services, HR policy, HR major initiatives.</p>
<p><b>Governance risks</b></p> <p>Likelihood: medium Severity: high Importance: high</p>	<p>Community relationship, external stakeholders.</p> <p>Organisational and government changes, workforce relations, attraction and retention, recruitment and selection, staff development and diversity. For example, how do we structure our participation in governance with an emphasis on mission in affiliated groups such as the PMSA and our ecumenical schools? Specifically in relation to the PMSA, collaborative work needs to continue on the construction of new PMSA constitution.</p>
<p><b>Operational or program risks</b></p> <p>Likelihood: high Severity: medium Importance: medium</p>	<p>Loosing key members of the commission or the executive staff. This is mitigated by continual attention to succession planning. For example, the difficulty in recruiting and selecting new members from the Uniting Church with the appropriate skill sets to serve and progress the mission of the 11 boards under the umbrella of the Schools and Residential Colleges Commission.</p>

Risks associated with the Schools and Residential Colleges Commission	
Risk category	Aspects
<b><i>Environmental, including event risks</i></b>  <b>Likelihood: low</b> <b>Severity: low</b> <b>Importance: low</b>	
<b><i>Brand and reputational risks</i></b>  <b>Likelihood: medium</b> <b>Severity: high</b> <b>Importance: high</b>	<p>Media and issues management, marketing, publication and web management, internal and external communication, public affairs management.</p> <p>Fraud, corruption, Code of Conduct, student protection, official misconduct.</p> <p>For example, what are the implications for the church of the August 2017 content and recommendation of the “Change the Course: National Report On Sexual Assault And Sexual Harassment At Australian Universities 2017”?</p>
<b><i>Strategic risks</i></b>  <b>Likelihood: low</b> <b>Severity: high</b> <b>Importance: low</b>	<p>School sustainability.</p> <p>Client, industry and customer services.</p> <p>Critical incident management, external stakeholders.</p> <p>Mitigated though strategic and contingency processes associated with commission operation and effectiveness.</p>

## Proposal

It is proposed that the 33rd Synod receive this report.

### Contact for report questions:

Name: Peter Campbell  
Position: Chairperson  
Email: [pjsecam@bigpond.net.au](mailto:pjsecam@bigpond.net.au)  
Phone: Home 07 4661 1454  
Mobile 0419 448 102



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## Report from Chaplaincy Commission

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### Context

Chaplaincy is one vital expression of the mission and ministry of the whole church as it engages with people and communities across Queensland. The community-centric nature of the ministry of chaplaincy has much to offer to the church's exploration of future directions and expressions of church.

The Chaplaincy Commission seeks to fulfil its mandate and responsibility for the oversight and development of chaplaincy within the Queensland Synod of the Uniting Church.

The focus of the commission in the last 18 months has been to reimagine, restructure and recruit in order to better facilitate and resource future growth, transition and innovation for the ministry of chaplaincy. Our planning and strategic thinking has intentionally aligned with the *Together on the way, enriching community* process of the Queensland Synod and particularly with the priority directions adopted at the 32nd Synod in Session.

# Priority Directions

## **To be Christ-centred, at prayer, and listening**

Chaplaincy is at its foundation a ministry of presence; a presence that seeks to re-present Christ, offers an active listening ear, both to the Spirit of God and to others and provides opportunity for appropriate prayer, ritual and reflection.

Within each context, chaplains are encouraged to work with organisations to ensure there are appropriate spaces for staff, clients and their families and visitors to draw aside and be still. They also seek to provide regular times of worship and prayer as well as special services and rituals to mark the significant events of life's journey.

The commission is working with our agencies to identify a space/symbol that might provide a quiet place of retreat and reflection for staff and visitors, and with the church, colleges, chaplains and agencies to resource organisational prayer.

Chaplains are encouraged to take time out for retreat and reflection to ensure healthy, sustainable and life-giving Christ-centred ministry.

## **Discipleship**

Chaplaincy provides unique opportunities for discipleship.

The nature of chaplaincy is in itself a profound reflection of discipleship as the chaplain lives out Christ's call to go out, reach out and demonstrate the welcoming embrace and love of God to all people. Chaplains are encouraged to connect and engage with various support networks including their congregation and presbytery to support them in their own growth and development. As chaplains live out their own discipleship they are presented, in every encounter, with an opportunity to engage with and encourage others in the way of Christ.

Some contexts lend themselves more easily to a structured approach to formation and growth such as within our schools and colleges. But there are many more circumstances in which chaplains provide context-appropriate 'discipleship' opportunities for others.

As the church continues to explore new and fresh ways of being the church in and for our communities the ministry of chaplaincy will most naturally provide a means by which 'community' discipleship can be nurtured.

## **Leadership**

In a society that is increasingly aware that there is more to life than work and the mindless accumulation of money and assets there has also been a growth in understanding of the benefit of caring for the whole person. This awareness has been accompanied by a growing appreciation of and desire for an engagement with chaplaincy in community and work spaces.

While in some instances the requirement will remain that of a supportive, pastoral presence there are many more contexts in which chaplains are required to be members of interdisciplinary teams alongside other professionals, provide oversight and management of



teams and are invited to provide strategic input and leadership for organisations. The opportunity and challenge to provide a prophetic voice within each of these spaces is an essential component of the ministry of chaplaincy and of Christian leadership.

The Chaplaincy Commission has been intentionally exploring avenues for extending the breadth of education for current and future chaplains to include studies in leadership, management and community development along with the theological and pastoral care requirements. There are also ongoing conversations around how chaplaincy is understood and integrated into formation programs and professional development structures.

The commission has and will continue to identify appropriate chaplains for inclusion in governance and leadership development opportunities.

### **Connecting with communities**

The nature of chaplaincy is community-centred.

Currently chaplains are serving in both paid and volunteer capacity within the following contexts.

- private and public health care
- residential, respite and community aged care
- police services
- defence
- schools, colleges and universities
- community services
- prison ministry
- sports
- industry.

Alongside these natural community connections with people and organisations chaplains are encouraged to build relationships with local ministers and congregations and, where appropriate, develop agency and congregation links.

The commission is also exploring ways to best work with, and resource, congregations and presbyteries in the identification and training of local community chaplains together with resourcing ministry agents in community development.

### **Youth, children and families**

The ministry of chaplaincy reaches across generations.

The theme for Chaplaincy Sunday 2016 was 'All people. All places' and focussed on chaplaincy as a ministry that occurs in multicultural contexts, among people from many different cultures, and by chaplains who come from a range of cultural backgrounds. All of this is a reflection of the call and commitment of the Uniting Church in Australia to be a truly multicultural church.

In the initial planning stages for Chaplaincy Sunday 2017 we looked to the Synod's priority directions. It was decided to focus on youth, children and families. Not surprisingly, the conversation quite quickly turned to how we might involve our school chaplains. While this

context of chaplaincy naturally lends itself to engagement with young people and, perhaps by extension, their families, it is crucial to understand that chaplains in all contexts offer pastoral care and support to the whole family including young people. The theme for Chaplaincy Sunday 2017: 'All ages. All stages' intentionally explored this understanding and sought to highlight the rich character of chaplaincy with young people and their families. From schools to hospitals, aged-care facilities and police stations, and from the workplace to the families of inmates, chaplains work with the whole family.

## Report

It was with a sense of regret that the Chaplaincy Commission accepted the resignation of the Rev Heather den Houting as chairperson of the commission following her election to the office of the general secretary at the last Synod in Session. The immediate appointment of a new chairperson was not forthcoming. This, together with changing structures and key personnel in a number of different contexts and low membership numbers generally impacted the work and progress of the commission particularly in the areas of growth and innovation.

The past 18 months has seen significant restructuring of the Chaplaincy Commission to better focus on and engage with the broader and future aspects of its responsibilities while maintaining a high level of support and oversight for current chaplains, contexts and placement processes.

This restructure has seen the focus for recruitment of new members on the basis of interest and/or expertise in the areas of theology, education, mission strategy and innovation, media and marketing, fundraising and finance.

### **Synod Chaplaincy Commission membership**

#### **Ex officio**

Moderator	Rev David Baker
General secretary (or delegate)	Rev David Fender
UnitingCare CEO representative	vacant
Executive officer	Rev Keren Seto

#### **Chairperson**

Rev Brian Hoole

#### **Members**

Bruce Moore  
Julie Mackay-Rankin  
Phil Smith  
Natalie Lewis  
Rev Dr Peter Hobson

As the commission welcomes new members it wishes to sincerely thank retiring chairperson and members Rev Heather den Houting, Colleen Geyer, Revs Heather Allison, Helen Dick, Jenny Tymms, Jenny Busch, John Saunders and Beatriz Skippen for their time and commitment over the term of their service.

The commission is seeking expressions of interest particularly from young adults and those with expertise in information technology and innovation. For further information please contact [Keren Seto](#).

### **Missional directions**

- Further recruitment to the Chaplaincy Commission
- Establish education pathways
- Leadership development and succession planning
- Consolidate marketing and communications plan
- Explore key areas and partnerships for future engagement
- Identify and implement new fundraising models.

### **Bright spots**

- Engagement with and learning from the variety of incredibly gifted, experienced and passionate chaplains who daily touch and influence multiple lives as they re-present Christ in all that they do.
- Collaboration with the Multi Cross Cultural Reference Group, chaplains and the Communications and Marketing team in the production of resources for Chaplaincy Sunday 2016, 'All people. All places' and 2017, 'All ages. All stages'.
- Chaplaincy Affirmation Days 26-28 October 2016 saw over 50 chaplains from across the state and various contexts gather for worship, celebration, encouragement, engagement and professional development. The theme was 'Grounded: Grounded in Christ, Grounded with relevant and appropriate information, knowledge and relationships, Grounded for fruitful ministry and life'.
- New areas of engagement in health, industry and school contexts including the Gold Coast Hospitals and Health Service, St Stephen's Hospital, Lady Cilento Children's Hospital, Wesley Linen Services and Shalom Christian College.
- Collaboration with Bremer Brisbane Presbytery around continued funding for the Active Faith university chaplaincy program.
- Building and strengthening relationships with presbyteries, agencies, schools, congregations, community groups and ecumenical partners to explore opportunities for collaboration, partnership and resourcing.
- Collaboration with the Communications and Marketing team in the creation and launch of Uniting Church chaplaincy promotion video.

## **Challenges/risks as we progress**

- A changing landscape both within society and within current models of chaplaincy.
- Level of knowledge, information, interest and engagement with different forms of ministry including chaplaincy.

- Identifying, clarifying and ensuring appropriate levels of education, formation, development and understanding for current and future chaplains.
- Connecting chaplains into supportive networks including with their presbytery.
- Sustainable funding.

## For consideration

- Addressing chaplaincy approaches in theological training for ordained and non-ordained ministries.
- Adding leadership and facilitation skills to chaplaincy training.

## Proposal

It is proposed that the 33rd Synod receive this report.

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### Contact for report questions:

Name: Rev Brian Hoole  
Position: Chairperson Synod Chaplaincy Commission  
Email: [presmin@bremerbrisbane.org.au](mailto:presmin@bremerbrisbane.org.au) Phone: 0417 667 671



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Report from

## Synod Ecumenical Relationships Committee



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### Context

Reconciliation is at the heart of the Uniting Church's understanding of the nature and purpose of the church—the reconciliation of heaven and earth, and all people, to God through Christ, of which the church is to be a sign and foretaste. Our congregations, councils and agencies are

called to bear witness to this foundational vision of church which is greater than our own institutional life, a story larger than our own. The Uniting Church in Australia's 40th anniversary this year has been an opportunity to recall the vision of Christian and cosmic unity which was so compelling to the architects of church union and the writers of the *Basis of Union*.

That vision continues to find expression in our life and witness in many ways—locally, regionally and on a state basis. The Uniting Church is either an initiator or active participant in most inter-church collaborations in communities across the state—from ministers' fellowships and state school Religious Instruction to Christmas, Easter and civic events and community care.

The Synod Ecumenical Relationships Committee seeks to foster this ecumenical spirit across the Synod, as well as energise and oversee the Synod's more formal ecumenical engagements and networking.

## Priority Directions

A key focus has been giving ongoing encouragement to the local prayer covenant initiative, One in Christ, which the 32nd Synod commended to the church. This contributes to the Synod's priority directions of being Christ-centred and developing a life of prayerful listening, and of creating stronger connections with the wider community.

Local ecumenical study of the booklet *Intercession* by Lukas Vischer, and the consequent covenanting of local churches to pray for each other, is a practical step enabling congregations to engage in intentional relationships which could transform the Christian witness in their communities.

## Report

### Membership

SERC membership for 2016-18 comprises John Agnew, Clive Ayre, Neil Ballment, David Busch, Sunil Kadaparambil, Richard Lance, Russell Morris, Nathan Barton and Fiona Patterson, with Bruce Johnson as observer/consultant. The committee continues to seek women and younger people to join. Three members are from outside the south-east corner and the use of teleconferencing is common. Additionally, each presbytery now has a SERC liaison person to help link their presbytery and its congregations with the committee's work, and to identify regional stories and issues for wider sharing.

### One in Christ – *Intercessions* and local prayer covenants

By December 2016, some 250 copies of the reprint of Lukas Vischer's slim volume *Intercessions* had been sold. It is not known how often the accompanying study guide available through the Synod's website has been downloaded. The booklet and study guide are designed to inspire and inform congregations for entering into prayer covenants with other churches in their community as an expression of their mutuality as members together in the Body of Christ. The committee is keen to hear how these studies and prayer covenants are developing. The 33rd Synod will incorporate elements of such a covenant in its daily schedule. Copies of *Intercession* are available through Vision Books or the publisher, Morning Star in Melbourne.

### Reformation 500th anniversary

The 500th anniversary of the Reformation on 31 October 2017 has generated a long list of commemorative events around the world over more than 12 months. SERC is organising a forum exploring the nexus between reformation and reconciliation for one of the lunch breaks

during the 33rd Synod. The Michael Putney Memorial Lecture will explore Reformation-related themes with Catholic and Lutheran keynote presenters, plus respondents, on 8 October 2017. An official Catholic-Lutheran commemoration will be held at St Peter's Lutheran College, Indooroopilly, on 1 November 2017 at 7 pm, involving Catholic Archbishop Mark Coleridge and Lutheran Bishop Paul Smith.

### Events

- Brisbane was privileged to host the General-Secretary of the World Council of Churches, Rev Dr Olav Fykse Tvelt, as the presenter of the **Michael Putney Memorial Lecture** in October 2016. His theme, "Ways Forward in Ecumenism in this Contemporary Age," identified a number of challenges and issues which prompted discussion. The lecture was live-streamed and recorded.
- The **2016 ecumenical dinner**, a collaboration between the Catholic, Anglican and Uniting Church ecumenical committees, was hosted by the Catholic Church at Ashgrove with Rev Dr Cathy Thomson of the Anglican Church speaking on "The Changing Face of Ecumenism". Dr Thomson, who had been active in ecumenical work and a vice-president of Queensland Churches Together, has since returned to Adelaide for family reasons.
- Two SERC members represented the Synod at the **UCA Christian Unity Working Group** annual meeting in October 2016. This meeting receives reports from each Synod, from Uniting Church in Australia member participants in international ecumenical councils and organisations, and from Uniting Church teams involved in national bilateral dialogues (the Roman Catholic-Uniting Church national dialogue is currently based in Brisbane). The 2017 meeting will be held the week prior to the 33rd Synod.
- SERC is encouraging interested Uniting Church in Australia members to attend the fourth **International Conference on Receptive Ecumenism** in Canberra, 6-9 November 2017.

### Queensland Churches Together

SERC has ensured that Uniting Church nominees continue to serve on Queensland Churches Together (QCT), its executive and its various commissions including Faith and Order, Queensland Churches Environmental Network (QCEN), the Joint Churches Domestic Violence Prevention Project, Church Together Indigenous Peoples Partnership, and the Commission for Religious Instruction and Chaplaincy in State Schools (CRICSS). Brief highlights of QCT's work since the 32nd Synod include:

- QCT became a founding member of the Queensland Faith Communities Council, a peak body of religious communities, in May 2017.
- The JCDVPP published a revised version of its excellent resource on domestic violence and the Christian faith, called *Questions Women Ask*. Member churches are revising all their resources to bring them up to date and looking at how training and information on prevention of domestic and family violence might be included in pastoral care courses and other in-service training.
- QCEN attempted to create a partnership with university researchers and obtain crowd-funding to investigate the health impacts of Coal Seam Gas (CSG) extraction on rural communities — after a promising start, a change in circumstances has seen QCEN move out of direct involvement although the research is still planned to proceed.
- A rural ministry summit was held in Warwick in May 2017 to assess the prospects of reviving Living Church in Rural Queensland as a commission of the QCT.
- CRICSS has been significantly involved in discussions with the State Education Department on issues regarding Religious Instruction in schools.
- In the wake of Cyclone Debbie, QCT is exploring if it has a role in the provision of disaster recovery chaplaincy.
- The future of CTIPP remains unclear—with the Catholic, Anglican and Uniting Churches developing their own Reconciliation Action Plans, the contribution which QCT seeks to make in this space may need to be re-evaluated.

## Resources

SERC Secretary Clive Ayre has compiled an ecumenical resource pack promoting Queensland initiatives and activities, primarily designed for new ordinands and ministry agents arriving from interstate. Presbyteries are welcome to ask for copies of this to give to such ministry agents at their arrival or induction. Attempts have been made to partner with other churches in creating a reading-reflection course on historical and contemporary aspects of ecumenism which could be used by ministry agents for Continuing Education for Ministry. This has proven more difficult than expected and the project has been put aside for the moment.

## Challenges/risks as we progress

The Uniting Church in Australia's ecumenical vision and commitment persist against the tidal flow of denominational angst about mission and resources in a survival-focussed paradigm. We risk abandoning a key part of our spiritual calling if we lower the horizons of our purpose to our own institutional security. We engage in ecclesiastical cannibalism if we see ourselves as competitors against other churches for a declining market share. Our movement bears witness to unity as a defining expression of authentic Christian mission—Christ's ministry of reconciliation—and we are challenged to maintain an open, generous posture towards the wider Body of Christ in faithfulness to who God calls us to be. The ecumenical vision — the reconciliation of the whole *oikumene* to God through Christ—also propels our passion for social justice, confronting a world of increasing polarisation, inequality, and a politics of resentment. This is the vibrant but challenging counter-cultural beacon which the Uniting Church insists on holding aloft in its life and witness.

In its limited way, SERC aims to keep that challenge and vision alive.

## For consideration

SERC acknowledges with gratitude the encouragement, coordinating and resourcing given to the Uniting Church in Australia's ecumenical work by Rev Dr Chris Walker in his role as the national consultant for Christian unity with the Assembly. Dr Walker retired from the Assembly in July 2017.

## Proposal

It is proposed that the 33rd Synod receive this report.

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### Contact for report questions:

Name: Rev Dr Clive Ayre  
Position: Secretary, SERC  
Email: [c.ayre@bigpond.com](mailto:c.ayre@bigpond.com) Phone: 0404 870 092





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Report from

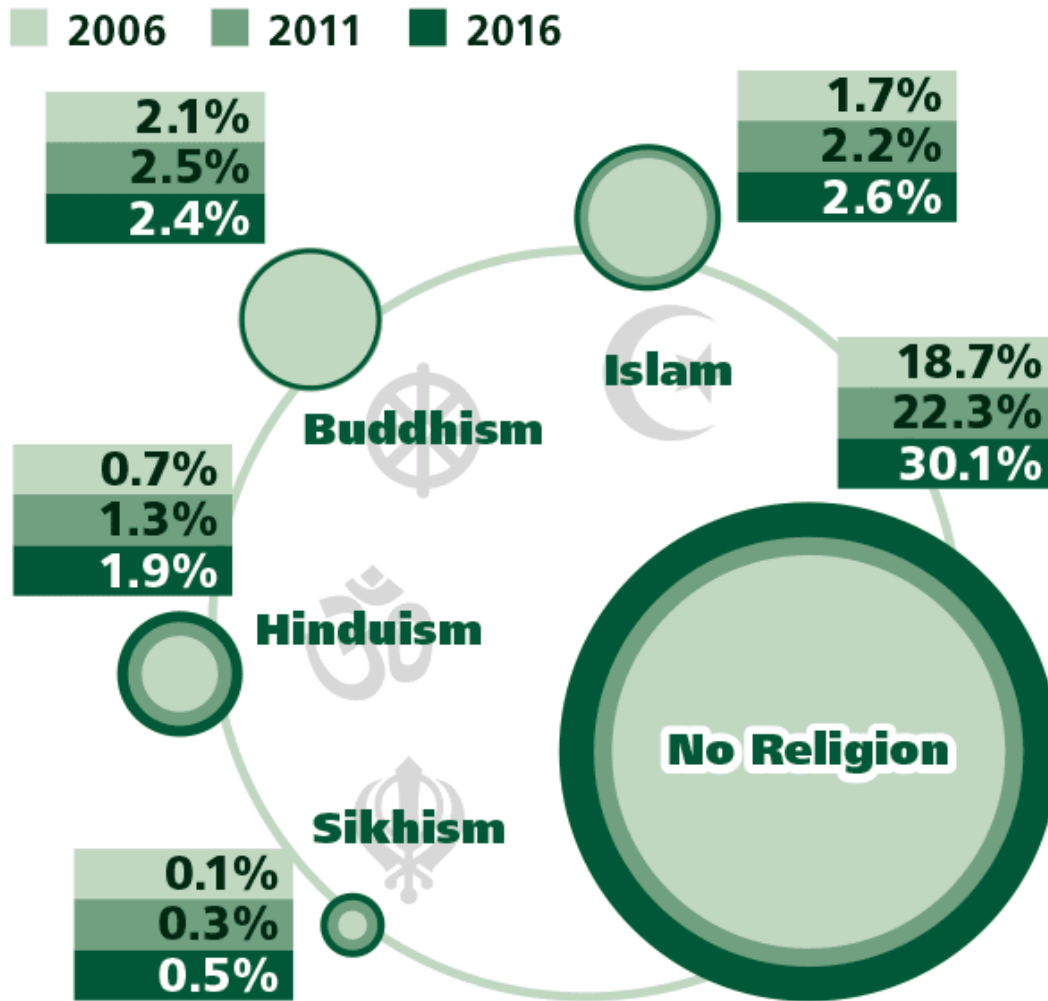
## Synod Interfaith Relationships Committee (SIRC)



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### Context

At this time Australia continues to experience increasing diversity both in the variety and numbers of those who identify with particular cultures and particular faiths.



A diagram showing such trends has been published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics<sup>1</sup>.

The percentages are as a proportion of the total population.

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2006, 2011, 2016.

Issues of social cohesion are becoming more and more important in what appears to be an increasingly fragmented world. Christians know our calling to “love our neighbour as ourselves” (Luke 10:27). We also know ourselves to be called to a ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:18) and peace-building (Matthew 5:9).

Within this theological understanding, the Synod IRC has been tasked with:

- a) encouraging throughout the Synod an understanding of other religious faiths, and
- b) promoting relationships with members of other religious faiths.

It is important that members of Synod understand that we are building relationships, creating friendships, not arguing points of belief. If anything, working in the interfaith space enables us to express our own firmly held Christian convictions with more clarity and greater love and respect for those who hold to other faith positions.

<sup>1</sup> 2071.0 Census of Population and Housing: Reflecting Australia – Stories from the Census, 2016  
LATEST ISSUE Released at 11.30 am (CANBERRA TIME) 28/06/2017

Membership of the committee as at 3 August 2017:

**Chairperson:** David Baker, moderator – ex officio

**Secretary:** Heather Griffin (Presbytery of South Moreton)

**Other members:**

- John Agnew (Presbytery of The Downs)
- Neil Ballment (Presbytery of South Moreton)
- Lesley Bryant (Presbytery of South Moreton)
- Philippa Core (Presbytery of Central Queensland)
- Bryan Gilmour (Presbytery of South Moreton)
- Julie Mackay-Rankin (Presbytery of South Moreton)
- Garth Read (Presbytery of Moreton Rivers)

Since the last Synod SIRC has focussed on:

- a) Assisting members of the Uniting Church to understand people of other faiths as neighbours and friends, as well as being able to articulate our own faith fully and succinctly as we share in faith conversations across religions.
- b) Working with people and organisations across the various faith traditions to come together in both formal and informal ways to discuss and act on values common to our traditions.

Major actions include:

1. Inviting Dave Andrews to speak at the 32nd Synod.
2. Holding a multi-faith event at Newlife Uniting Church, Robina.
3. Involvement with the development and launch of the Queensland Faith Communities Council.
4. Study Guide for the 2012 Assembly document “Friendship in the Presence of Difference”.
5. Assisting the Synod in holding a Uniting Church “Friends in Faith” Iftar Dinner.

## Priority Directions

SIRC has primarily advanced:

### Priority A

*Enabling a demonstrated commitment to the shared call and vision.*

Connects to: *Forming active and accountable disciples of Jesus confident in sharing faith.*

AND

### Priority E

*Engaging in opportunities for intentional, open community connections and partnerships.*

Connects to: *Working for Christian unity; Engaged in authentic community relationships; Reaching out and speaking out for justice and peace for all creation.*

We do this through working within the church to enable people to more readily and fully articulate their own faith and, at the same time, listen more intentionally as others share their faith stories with us.

In the course of our work we have, either formally or informally, connected with people from a number of other faith traditions in Toowoomba, Brisbane and the Gold Coast. Our desire is that this extends also to other parts of the state.

## Report

The committee met every second month. Meetings were held on 9 June 2016, 11 August 2016, 13 October 2016, 8 December 2016 (combined with the Synod Ecumenical Relationships Committee), 9 February 2017, April meeting cancelled due to extreme weather event, 9 June 2017, 11 August 2017.

In addition to business at hand, some meetings were used to discuss the presence of other faith traditions in our society and where possible, to invite a guest from that faith tradition.

We provide here a few more details of the major actions of SIRC since last Synod.

1. 21 May 2016: Dave Andrews was invited to speak at “Synod Unchained” on developing peaceful relationships between Christians and Muslims.
2. 11 October 2016: An event at Newlife Uniting Church, Robina in partnership with the Centre for Interfaith and Cultural Diversity at Griffith University and the Multifaith Advisory and Action Group on the Gold Coast. Speakers: Dr Arini Beaumaris (Baha’i Centre), Ashmore Imam Imraan Hussein North Gold Coast mosque, Rev Dona Spencer Southport Uniting Church. Rev David Baker moderated. About 90 people attended.
3. 2016–2017: The committee worked with the draft constitution for the recently launched Queensland Faith Communities Council and through the work of the Synod Standing Committee, the Queensland Synod of the Uniting Church in Australia became the first foundation member of the council. David Pitman, Lesley Bryant and Heather Griffin were appointed by the Synod Standing Committee as the three official Uniting Church representatives on this group.
4. 2016–2017: The committee worked with the Assembly Relations with Other Faiths Working Group to develop a study guide for the 2012 Assembly document “Friendship in the Presence of Difference”.
5. 18 June 2017: The Synod, at the behest of the Assembly, held a “Friends in Faith” Iftar dinner at the Uniting Church Centre at Auchenflower. Approximately 15 Muslim and 15 Uniting Church people attended. It is hoped that this event will provide a starting point for local congregations to engage and partner with local Muslim communities during Ramadan to provide similar hospitality.
6. Heather Griffin is the nominated representative to the Assembly Relations with Other Faiths Working Group.

In addition, members were involved in a variety of other ways.

The moderator, on behalf of the Queensland Synod, has made official statements in response to offensive behaviour towards people of other faiths, has attended a gathering at the Holland Park Mosque to show solidarity with those of the Muslim faith in the wake of tragic deaths at a mosque in Canada, has participated in a Christian-Muslim group which resulted from the approach by the Queensland Heads of Churches to the Islamic Council of Queensland and has experienced, first-hand, how interfaith is “done” in India.

Other members have been heavily involved in the following aspects of interfaith interaction and friendship:

- Interfaith dimensions of hospital chaplaincy
- North Brisbane Interfaith Group
- Toowoomba Interfaith Group
- Multifaith Advisory and Action Group (Gold Coast)
- Compassionate Cities Project (Gold Coast)
- Believing Women for a Culture of Peace (Brisbane)
- The Chai Women's Group (Gold Coast)
- Interfaith Peace Conference and visit of UNESCO Ambassadors (Toowoomba)
- Queensland Forum for Jews, Christians and Muslims
- Annual Police Multifaith Dinners in Brisbane, Toowoomba and the Gold Coast
- Events at the Centre for Interfaith and Cultural Dialogue, Griffith University
- Several interfaith events at Parliament House
- World of Women for World Peace event, Taiwan.

One member was the Christian speaker at the memorial service held at Moorooka for murdered Sikh bus driver Manmeet Sharma.

## Challenges/risks as we progress

Challenges:

- Addressing Islamophobia.
- Facing and challenging the increasing belief in society that “all religion is bad news” (not yet a major position, but very strong nevertheless).
- Raising awareness within our local congregations and agencies of the importance of compassion as a core value in our society. It needs every congregation in every community to take steps to engage and build communities of compassion, and to take steps to educate the whole of every community towards that end.

## For consideration

The work undertaken by this committee is an important part of the overall call by the Uniting Church for a just society, one in which all members are valued and heard.

## Proposal

It is proposed that the 33rd Synod receive this report.

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### Contact for report questions:

Name: Heather Griffin

Position: Secretary, Synod Interfaith Relationships Committee

Email: [hgriffin@internode.on.net](mailto:hgriffin@internode.on.net) Phone: 0438 795 304



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Report from

## **Synod Multi Cross Cultural Reference Group**

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### Context

The Synod Multi Cross Cultural Reference Group seeks to encourage, inform and guide congregations, presbyteries and Synod agencies and activities as they incorporate into their life and mission the Uniting Church in Australia's commitment to being a truly multicultural church.

Cultural diversity is a rapidly growing feature of the church's life and the Australian community in which we witness and serve. But the impulse for multicultural engagement is not merely sociological. The challenge of being truly multicultural is theological and ecclesiological — the call to more fully become the sign and foretaste of a reconciled humanity under Christ, living out our baptism into Christ's body as a fellowship of reconciliation, one family of the Father of all in heaven and earth.

As a reference group, we seek to be a resource, enabler, advocate and bridge; to help to build relationships, to be a catalyst for events, and to bring expertise and encouragement to situations where cultural diversity offers particular challenges and opportunities. We also seek to support culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, congregations, leaders and ministry agents in their life within the church. We both initiate proposals and respond to requests, drawing on the gifts and skills of our members and the wider culturally diverse communities of the church.

Our priorities since the 32nd Synod have focussed on developing the work in the five strategic priorities for 2016-17 which we indicated in our report to that Synod:

1. Help develop stronger links between CALD faith communities/congregations and the Uniting Church (primarily through presbyteries and the Synod MCCR), to enhance the mission of the church;

2. Establish a Synod-wide next generation CALD leaders network and development program;
3. Create cross-cultural experiences of worship and fellowship which, among other things, foster and showcase the leadership and gifts of young people and women in our CALD communities;
4. Establish effective platforms of communication to connect people across cultural groups and encourage wider Uniting Church cross-cultural engagement;
5. Foster awareness of biblical, theological and ministry resources from different cultural perspectives, and encourage greater reflection of cultural diversity in congregational worship and study.

The MCCRG membership has changed several times since the 32nd Synod. Currently it comprises two ordained and 10 lay members (not including ex officio) drawn from 10 cultural backgrounds.

## Priority Directions

Parallel with the reference group's identification of its five strategic priorities, the 32nd Synod discerned its own five thematic priorities. Our work intersects directly with three of those Synod priority directions.

The new cross-cultural leadership development network, Next Gen Arise, contributes to the priorities of **Discipleship** and **Leadership development**.

The reference group's engagement with multicultural communities through events and forums, and its visits to each presbytery through 2017 to stimulate discussion about engaging with cultural diversity in the communities served by our congregations and agencies, supports the priority of **Community connection**.

**Multicultural capacity-building** has also been identified as one of the four Key Change Initiatives to guide the Synod's work in fulfilling those five priority directions. Our work with presbyteries to identify needs and possible resources, both for enhancing our multicultural churches in their relationship with the wider Uniting Church and for improving cross-cultural competencies in the wider church will contribute to this.

## Report

This report will focus on the five strategic priorities which have shaped our work since the 32nd Synod.

### Strategy one – Equipping the whole church

- MCCRG members met with Presbytery Synod Interface to explain this priority and gain support for presbytery engagement through 2017.
- An MCCRG delegation has visited each presbytery for the purpose of gathering data on multi-cross-cultural congregations, identifying relevant concerns and challenges and connecting the work of the reference group with presbyteries.
- Developed and ran two workshops on the Code of Ethics for Multi-Cross-Cultural Ministry.
- A presentation at the National Presbytery Ministers' Conference in April 2017 created discussion about multi-cross-cultural issues.

## **Learnings and further directions**

- There is an enormous variety of multi-cross-cultural engagement by congregations across presbyteries with some effective and creative initiatives, but also some significant challenges.
- It may be useful to work directly with Pastoral Relations Committees within each presbytery to develop their oversight and engagement with multi-cross-cultural ministry.
- There is a need for cross-cultural awareness and skills in congregations and for people in church leadership roles. MCCRG plans to run the Assembly 'Reading Cultures' cross-cultural training course for Synod and presbytery leadership through 2018, and would seek to develop workshops and resources for congregations. We also will seek to work with Trinity College Queensland in developing the training in cross-cultural competencies for ordinands.
- Many multicultural congregations are unfamiliar with Uniting Church processes but are keen to learn and they respond well when training is given. MCCRG has been developing and trialling training packages for church councils and congregations and will continue this, including producing multi-lingual topic sheets covering major areas of governance, church life and witness.

## **Strategy two – Next Gen Arise**

- MCCRG's proposal to create a cross-cultural leadership development network was accepted and funded in 2016/17 Synod budget, including a 0.25 project officer position. This has seen the emergence of Next Gen Arise with Pastor Noah Kim appointed as project officer, beginning work September 2016.
- Noah has gathered a core leadership group of 12-15 emerging leaders from different cultural backgrounds to spearhead the development of Next Gen Arise, including cross-cultural worship celebrations on the 5th Sundays of the month, monthly Saturday afternoon leadership training workshops, social media platforms and email contacts, and an inaugural leadership training and planning camp in August 2017.
- The Next Gen Arise team also has developed good links with similar movements in other Synods, and there is discussion about Queensland hosting a national Uniting Church next generation conference in 2018.
- Next Gen Arise is keen to work alongside, and not replace, next-gen empowerment strategies which may arise within cultural groups. We were excited to see the first Samoan next-gen retreat held in Brisbane in June 2017, and we celebrate the growing role of 2nd-Gen in the leadership of the annual Tongan National Conference.
- Funding for the project officer position has continued (at 0.25) into 2017-18 as the priorities and directions of Next Gen Arise continue to develop under Noah's leadership.
- MCCRG has sponsored emerging leaders to attend key events such as the National Young Adult Leaders Conference (NYALC) in July 2016 and Yurora/NCYC in January 2017. Overall, 20 youth and young adults from Brisbane attended NYALC 2016 sponsored by the Queensland Synod and South Moreton Presbytery.
- We have appreciated collaborating with Trinity College Queensland to facilitate culturally appropriate approaches to theological training and pathways for CALD people and emerging leaders. We acknowledge with gratitude the work of Rev Mel Perkins through 2016 and subsequently Dr Leigh Trevaskis and Rev Dr Peter Hobson in their encouragement of CALD students and facilitating access to courses and appropriate assessment tools.



### **Learnings and further directions**

- Connecting Next Gen Arise with emerging cross-cultural leaders outside South East Queensland is an important challenge.
- Next Gen Arise is working with Synod initiatives to identify and equip emerging cross-cultural leaders to participate in presbytery and Synod activities and leadership.

### **Strategy three – Cross-cultural integration**

- Kangaroo Point Uniting Church hosted a MCCRG forum in October 2016 on 'Generational Transitions in a Multi-Cultural Church'. This was a lively, challenging forum which also introduced the new Next Gen Arise initiative. It highlighted the energy and passion, but also the challenges, that lie behind the church's goal of empowering and equipping next-generation leadership in multicultural communities.
- MCCRG organised a multicultural celebration marking the Uniting Church 40th anniversary at Beenleigh Region Uniting Church in June 2017. This attracted over 300 people. It was a great day of celebration, feasting and worship, and created excitement for similar events to be held in the future.
- We have encouraged attendance by CALD representatives at the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Women (South Pacific) conference in July 2018.

### **Learnings and further directions**

- There is a misconception that events labelled 'cross-cultural' only apply to CALD communities and not to the church as a whole. How do we promote a holistic understanding of the entire church being inherently multicultural and that 'cross-cultural' is an invitation to everyone?
- We continue to be inspired by the issues raised at our community forums and we intend to continue to promote these.
- The Uniting Women national conference in Brisbane in September 2018 will be an important opportunity to engage our multicultural communities in a national Uniting Church event as leaders and participants. The MCCRG chairperson is on the planning team.
- Connecting CALD fellowship groups with the Uniting Church Adult Fellowship (UCAF) network holds potential for new whole-of-church relationships.

### **Strategy four – Communications**

- A Facebook page has been established to focus on multi-cross-cultural news and groups.
- The MCCRG website has been revised.
- We have appreciated *Journey's* ongoing interest in and commitment to including cultural diversity in its content.

### **Learnings and further directions**

- Social media platforms require ongoing contributions of content, which can be difficult to source from CALD communities. 'Telling the stories' remains a constant challenge.

### **Strategy five – Biblical and ministry resources**

- At the time of writing, production of video Bible studies based on the 2016 Synod multicultural Bible study presentations had not been completed.
- This priority has not been able to receive the attention we had hoped. However, we note the emergence of publications and websites which offer broadly multicultural and 'global South' resources for worship and church life, and we would be keen to promote these.

## Other matters

- The MCCRG assisted in two Uniting Church national conferences held in South East Queensland since the 32nd Synod; the biennial Fijian *koniferedi* at Mt Tamborine (July 2016) and the annual Niuean National Conference (September 2016). Looking ahead, we look forward to welcoming the Korean National Conference to the Sunshine Coast in October 2018.
- MCCRG records its deep thanks to Rev Dr Jovili Meo and Radini Lisa Meo for their participation in the MCCRG and their leadership in the Fijian community over many years. Their move to Sydney mid-2016 for family reasons has been a great loss to this Synod. We also thank Rev Hohaia Matthews for his leadership in this space while at Logan Central Multicultural Uniting Church. He has retired and the family have returned to South Australia.

## Challenges/risks as we progress

We note a growing awareness across the Synod of the need for the Uniting Church to be more open to multicultural constituencies and responsive to its multicultural social context. This rising level of recognition and intentionality is most welcome.

Our visits to presbyteries have revealed some great stories but also identified challenges. And not just for our mostly-Anglo congregations. Our culturally defined churches also face growing challenges in ministering to both first and second generations, and they need the wider Uniting Church to journey with them.

Cross-cultural literacy and competency for the whole church, the training and empowerment of emerging cross-cultural leaders, and reaching across monocultural 'silos' to express a more integrated life of cultural diversity under Jesus Christ, remain critical needs and priorities.

## Proposal

It is proposed that the 33rd Synod receive this report.

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### Contact for report questions:

Name: Mrs Akesa Racava  
Position: Chair, Multi-Cross Cultural Reference Group  
Email: [akesaracava@bigpond.com](mailto:akesaracava@bigpond.com) Phone: 0459 357 632



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Report from

## UnitingCare Queensland

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### Context

#### **The changing face of health, aged care and community services**

UnitingCare Queensland has undergone a period of significant change since the last Synod in Session. At the heart of this change is our mission — to support people to “live life in all its fullness” (John 10:10).

The changing face of community services impacts every aspect of our business. We are now feeling the effects of and responding to changes relating to:

- consumer-directed care – aged care and disability services
- increased competition from for-profit and not-for-profit providers, including new entrants into health and community services
- tightening of private health funding
- increased contestability in government funding
- changes in the community driven by technology
- demographic shifts and changing needs in the community.

We remain committed to providing services in regional and remote areas where there are few, if any, other providers. We provide services to some of the most disadvantaged communities in the country. We want to ensure our services are structured in such a way that will enable us to continue to do this. We are continually working to refine our service and business models, operating model, structure and business processes to be fit for purpose to ensure we can continue to sustainably support the communities we serve.

# Key achievements

## **Reshaping and transforming UnitingCare Queensland**

As foreshadowed at the 32nd Synod, the changing external environment led us to deeply reflect on our mission and purpose, the services we provide, the people and communities we serve, our business and operating models, our capability, our financial sustainability and our ambitions for the future. This is truly a time for the current board and executive to exercise our roles as intergenerational stewards as we navigate how we deliver mission in these changing times.

UnitingCare Queensland is changing the way it operates to support the delivery of services. During the past year we commenced the major integration of our corporate support functions previously operated by Blue Care, UnitingCare Health and UnitingCare Community. We brought new capability into our organisation as we navigate the world of marketing and customer experience. We are enabling our staff to be more mobile as they deliver Blue Care community services to more than 18,000 people every week. Our mission team has also been re-formed and is well-positioned to provide leadership.

We completed a new three-year strategic plan, aligned business and culture plans.

It has been a period of major change and disruption but also a year of embracing opportunity. Our staff and leaders have worked incredibly hard to sustain services, seize opportunities and build the foundations for the future.

## **Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse**

We have undertaken a review of our Child Safe, Child Friendly Framework and how it has been implemented across our services. We continue to monitor the work of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse to ensure our framework and practice takes into account the learnings of the Royal Commission. We will refresh our framework in the latter half of 2017 and reinvigorate our implementation efforts to ensure that child safety continues to be a high priority for our people.

We have worked with the Queensland Synod and the Uniting Church nationally to support the church in its response to the Royal Commission, including in the preparation for its appearance before the Commission in Case Study 56 in March 2017.

We continue to work with the Uniting Church in Queensland and nationally to support efforts to provide redress to people who were abused as children. We have participated in government consultations and meetings with our agency and ecumenical counterparts to discuss matters of mutual interest. We remain closely involved in this work, ready to consider and respond to proposals put forward by the Commonwealth Government in establishing a National Redress Scheme.

## **Reconciliation Action Plan 2017-2020**

We are nearing finalisation of our third Reconciliation Action Plan, and have set ourselves “stretch” targets, particularly around employment. The RAP will be launched in late 2017.

Our first and second CEO Reconciliation Awards were held in Reconciliation Week 2016 and 2017. There is a wealth of talent amongst our staff and volunteers and we are pleased to be able to recognise the achievements of those who are so committed to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and families we serve. We are proud of their achievements. Our

commitment to the importance of the Indigenous specific services provided through Blue Care, ARRCs and Child and Family Services remains a key focus.

### **Newpin**

UnitingCare Queensland is working with the Queensland Government on the Newpin Social Benefit Bond. It is Queensland's first social impact bond and represents a new model of funding social services in Queensland where investment is made by private investors who get a return on achievement of the particular social outcome. It provides the opportunity for investors to make ethical and social investments, for governments to save taxpayer money as long-term, expensive interventions can be avoided, for providers to refine programs and deliver better services and outcomes for clients and for individuals and communities to benefit from better social outcomes.

There are a number of other bonds underway around the world, realising some excellent social benefits and competitive returns for investors. Some common outcomes sought in bonds around the world are reduction in reoffending rates, reduction in homelessness rates and reunification of families involved in child protection systems.

The Newpin Queensland Social Benefit Bond has investors funding the establishment and operation of the Newpin program in three regions across Queensland. Uniting (NSW) have operated the New South Wales Newpin Social Benefit Bond since 2013 and are achieving good results. In Queensland, the program will focus primarily on working with Indigenous families. It is an 18-month centre-based program that has been designed to strengthen family engagement, and has an established track record in successfully ensuring that more children are able to live safely with their families.

It is estimated that around two and half times more children will be reunited with their families than would occur in the absence of the Newpin program.

Payments will be made to UnitingCare Queensland by the Queensland Government based on the incremental number of children successfully reunited with their families. The level of these payments will be reflected in the investment returns generated by the Newpin Queensland Social Benefit Bond.

It is exciting to work with Indigenous families, the Queensland Government and Social Ventures Australia under this innovative model.

### **Disability services**

In 2016-17 we provided support to 1,220 people with disabilities. Some of these clients are covered by the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) which continues to roll out around Australia.

It is 12 months since the commencement of the NDIS in Townsville, with roll-out occurring progressively in the Toowoomba, Mackay and Ipswich regions. The NDIS roll-out continues to challenge both clients and service providers. In UnitingCare Queensland, we remain firmly focussed on providing the best support we can to help people live life in all its fullness. We offer support and advice to people with a disability as the NDIS rolls out across Queensland and continue to shape our service models and business processes to support the changing system requirements and to meet the needs of our clients.

There are many stories about the difficulty people have in accessing the supports they need and we continue to advocate for system improvements and for individual clients. There have been some incredible results with the creative thinking that the NDIS enables. For example, a

child with a disability was distressed and would not attend her regular therapy sessions. Working with her family, it was established that she has a passion for horses and a horse owner was found who was happy for the girl to come to know her horse. The therapist supported the child to undertake all of her therapy on the horse where the child gained the necessary benefit of the therapy, participated in an activity of great interest and excitement to her and was brought into contact and relationship with a person from the community to share an interest in horses.

‘Mission Possible’ — our disability marketing campaign — captures our hope that people with disabilities get to discover and live their own dreams and ambitions.

The NDIS will continue to be a major focus for UnitingCare Queensland.

### **Australian Regional and Remote Community Services (ARRCS)**

After three years of operation, ARRCS continues to provide quality care to people in some of the most remote parts of Australia. In 2016-17 we operated 292 residential aged care beds, 59 flexi-care beds, 50 retirement living units, community care for around 2,500 clients and disability services for around 27 people.

We continue to meet accreditation requirements and develop productive relationships with the people and communities we serve. There continues to be growth in our service footprint, capital improvements and new facilities, including:

- Mutitjulu Residential Aged Care built
- Terrace Gardens, Darwin (\$15.1m) works commenced February 2017 and will continue to late 2018, including a dementia specific unit
- Hetti Perkins, Alice Springs (\$6m) Development Approval received in January 2017 with commencement for construction works anticipated for late 2017
- East Arnhem (Nhulunbuy) Flexible Aged Care Service — planning underway
- Staff accommodation projects completed at Yulara, Docker River and Tennant Creek.

We continue to take a strategic, long-term approach to tackling the issues of remote service delivery including workforce, leadership, funding pressures and ongoing regulatory compliance. We have worked hard to develop relationships with the communities we serve and continue our efforts to build our Indigenous workforce. We enjoy ongoing support from the Northern Synod.

### **Environmental sustainability**

UnitingCare Queensland has achieved good outcomes in its environmental sustainability measures in recent years with significant reductions in energy consumption and carbon emissions.

We have refreshed our commitment to environmental sustainability with the recent establishment of an Environmental Sustainability Committee, chaired by our Director of Mission and with representation from across UCQ. This committee is tasked with developing our Environmental Sustainability Strategy, overseeing and monitoring sustainability initiatives and engaging our staff and volunteers in a sustainability culture.

In late 2016 UnitingCare Queensland was announced as a finalist in the Premier’s Sustainability Awards; the Queensland Government’s highest acknowledgement of leaders in sustainability, innovation and eco-efficiency. We were finalists in the Brisbane City Council Lord Mayor’s Business Awards for Sustainability in Business.

In line with our mission, we continue our commitment to responsible environmental stewardship.

### **New services and closure of services**

In accordance with our commitment to provide quality services to our communities, we monitor our property portfolio and make decisions about the need to refurbish, close or build new facilities to provide services with consideration given to community need, other providers and services in the region and our broader service footprint.

Since the last Synod in Session, in addition to the ARRCs developments above, we have made the following service decisions:

- Redevelopment of Star of the Sea Elders Village on Thursday Island commenced in December 2016.
- Redevelopment of Mackay Homefields Residential Aged Care commenced in June 2017.
- Blue Care acquired Argyle Gardens and Carlyle Gardens Retirement Villages in Townsville, Mackay and Bundaberg.
- Blue Care acquired Fraser Shores Retirement Village in Hervey Bay.
- The new Mt Louisa Residential Aged Care Service opened in Townsville in August 2016 following the decommissioning of Pallarenda Residential Aged Care.
- Blue Care's Winston House in Gympie closed in August 2016.
- Bayhaven in Hervey Bay also closed in August 2016.
- Amaroo Aged Care Service in Tweed Heads closed in September 2016 and the land transferred to Uniting NSW and ACT.
- The Kingscliff Aged Care Service transferred to Uniting (NSW) in October 2016.
- Downsizing of Millbank Residential Aged Care Facility in Bundaberg was completed in March 2017.
- Decommissioning of the Kingswood building at the Toowoomba Residential Aged Care Facility announced in March 2017 is underway.
- A rolling program of refurbishment of residential aged care facilities has continued.
- An Emergency Department is being added to The Sunshine Coast Private Hospital.

### **Policy and advocacy**

UnitingCare Queensland remains active in the development of policy in our fields and in advocating for our clients and client groups. We have contributed to a range of government and parliamentary inquiries, including in relation to competition and productivity in our sectors, disability services, foster care, working with children checks, affordable housing, retirement village regulation, aged care funding changes especially for people with complex needs and those in rural and remote areas. We work closely with our partners, including UnitingCare Australia and the Community Services Industry Alliance, as well as in our own name, to contribute to important policy debate.

We have engaged with government agencies, Members of Parliament, ecumenical counterparts, other not-for-profit providers, including across the UnitingCare network and potential partners from the business world. Advocacy and contribution to policy debate is an important part of our business as an industry leader.

### **Cross-synod collaboration**

Recognising the common issues facing the church's community services in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria, the synods represented through the boards of UCQ, Uniting in NSW and ACT, and Uniting in Victoria and Tasmania have agreed to an ongoing conversation

between chairs and CEOs in order to explore common challenges and directions and to share learnings and capabilities to support our navigation through the changing external environment we are facing and what is fast becoming a single market (especially in aged care and disability) across the eastern states.

UCQ and Uniting NSW and ACT have agreed to work together in a Joint Venture focussed on people with disabilities and the NDIS. UCQ is also leading work across agencies in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia to develop a procurement hub which is predicted to improve purchasing outcomes for participants. Other opportunities for working and learning together have been identified and it is hoped that further work will be progressed into the future.

### **Helena Goldie partnership**

Since 2010, UnitingCare Health nurses and allied health professionals have conducted biannual visits to the Helena Goldie Hospital and the College of Nursing at Munda in the Western Province of the Solomon Islands. At the hospital, we assist with medical and surgical resources and in-service training, while at the college we provide educational support and sponsorship of nursing students. This work is further supported by some visiting medical practitioners who generously give one or two weeks a year undertaking clinical work in the hospital. Our continued partnership is only made possible by the generous dedication of time and expertise as well as financial contributions from staff and clinicians.

In 2016/17 we provided sponsorship and support to five students plus contributed to the purchase of nursing manuals for every student at the college. Through the dedication of regular payroll contributions by staff and other in-kind support from some of our suppliers we were able to set up a training simulation lab in the College of Nursing and purchased textbooks, uniforms and other educational resources. We donated an ultrasound machine which is much needed to support the limited equipment in the hospital. The culmination of the deep appreciation of our partnership was witnessed and acknowledged in the 2017 college graduation ceremony of the student cohort.

### **Other service highlights**

#### UnitingCare Health

- Private hospitals across Australia are experiencing a prolonged period of softness in demand, attributed to a range of factors. In response, UCH has been focussed on driving performance and managing costs. We have focussed relationships with our doctors and our communities as well as developing relationships to support productive negotiations with private health fund providers as contracts come up for renewal.
- We provided 364,214 bed days in 2016-17, with almost 84,000 operations and 33,145 emergency department presentations.
- We trained 400 medical students and 856 nursing students and were supported in our work by 77,000 volunteer hours.
- We have announced that we will open an Emergency Department at the Sunshine Coast Private Hospital in early 2018, further adding to the services we provide to the Sunshine Coast community.
- We have had a number of changes in senior hospital leadership and have managed through this by supporting existing capability and recruiting new personnel with deep experience in the health sector.
- We celebrated 40 years of the Wesley Hospital in March 2017. Patients were transferred from St Helen's Hospital at South Brisbane on 1 March 1977 to the Auchenflower site.



## Aged care

- Each week, Blue Care assists around 18,765 people in the community and has 4,055 bed licences in residential aged care facilities.
- We increased our retirement living portfolio to provide people with a greater range of options for living as they age, now with a portfolio of 2,635 seniors' housing units. This strategy has helped to build our regional presence and strength, as we look for opportunities to integrate to provide a larger suite of services to the people we serve.
- Understanding and responding to the impacts of aged care reforms has been a key focus of our activity since last Synod in Session. The marketisation of community aged care means that we have had to work hard to understand what our customers want and how to meet those needs. At the front-face, we have revamped our website, undertaken extensive marketing activity, and engaged with our existing clients to help them navigate the changes. We have been successful in retaining clients and have also been successful at increasing the number of people we support. Behind the scenes, we continue to look at systems refinements as we navigate this new way of working.
- There recently has been negative publicity in some locations (especially Bundaberg) about reductions in hours of nursing staff. These changes are linked to both significant reductions in aged care funding and to the introduction of new models of care. Our goal is that all our services operate at industry benchmarks and hours are only being reduced where services are significantly over benchmarks. We continue to work hard to engage our staff, residents and families about changes to staffing models and of course to ensure the quality of care is not compromised.

## Child and Family Services

- Child and Family Services continue to deliver a range of high-quality services to support children, families and communities across Queensland.
- In 2016-17 we answered 158,000 calls to Lifeline, up from 120,000.
- We supported 541 children in out-of-home care.
- Lifeline Bookfest sales across Queensland reached \$2.65m.
- We are a key provider of community recovery and crisis support services. We were able to mobilise quickly to respond to Cyclone Debbie, the closure of Queensland Nickel, the death of bus driver Manmeet Sharma at Moorooka.
- The former Blair Athol Homelessness Services are now fully integrated into UCQ Child and Family Services.
- The child and family services previously operated by Frontier Services in Queensland are now integrated into UCQ's Child and Family Outback Services.

# Board and governance

## Board membership

Since the last Synod in Session, we welcomed General Secretary Heather den Houting as an ex officio member of the Board. Heather's background and experience, including her history as Director of Mission for Blue Care, has meant that she has been able to make a valuable contribution to the work of the Board.

We farewelled Jude Munro in December 2016 after almost seven years of service. Jude brought a wealth of experience to the Board and chaired the Quality Committee for five years.

We farewelled Rev Dr David Pitman who finished his term as board member in March 2017 after six years' service on the Board. We thank David for his contribution.

Nigel Alexander joined the Board in May 2017. He brings a wide range of experience as an executive board chair and director.

We farewelled Kerry Batchler and Professor Harry McConnell as external members of the Quality Committee. We are grateful for their contribution.

### **Governing documents**

We have implemented changes to our Constitution and by-laws that took effect on 1 July 2017. This has included development of an Annual Statement of Missional Intent, on which we report annually to the Synod Standing Committee.

### **CEO recruitment and transition**

At the time of writing, the Board is in the process of recruiting a new chief executive officer. More detail is likely to be known about this at the time of Synod in Session. Planning is underway to ensure a smooth transition to a new CEO.

### **Board and governance priorities**

For 2017-18, priorities include:

- CEO recruitment
- Review the Board committee structure to ensure support of UCQ to achieve its strategic goals
- Independent Board evaluation in accordance with the Board's biennial external evaluation policy.

### **Executive leadership team**

Our realignment and restructure has seen considerable changes in our executive team with recruitment of new internal and external capability onto the executive team. The Chief Executive Officer is supported by an executive leadership team which includes a Group Executive for Child and Family Services, Health, Regional and Remote Services, Integrated Services South East Queensland, Commercial Services, Customer Services, Human Resources and Digital and Technology; an Executive Director Transformation, Governance and Policy; a Director of Mission and a Chief Financial Officer who provide leadership, strategic and operational direction, and oversight of performance.

### **Strategic Plan 2017-2020**

A key piece of work for us this year has been development of our Strategic Plan 2017-2020. This work has renewed and refreshed our commitment to our mission and brought into focus what we must prioritise in the next three years as responsible stewards of the mission, as follows:

- creating compelling value for people and communities
- having a sustainable portfolio of services
- one UCQ
- new foundations
- enabling partnerships.

By the time of the Synod in Session, the strategic plan will be available to members of Synod in Session and we will speak to it in our verbal presentation.

Flowing on from realignment of our structure, review of our service and business models, identification of process improvements and development of the strategic plan, we have developed a budget for FY18 and the out years which is focussed on our priorities. There are many financial pressures impacting on financial viability for all agencies operating in our sector

and we too feel the pressure. However, we believe we have the right capability, financial focus and business strategy to sustain the mission of the Uniting Church into the future.

## Mission and chaplaincy

As intergenerational stewards of all that has been entrusted to us it is imperative that the mission of Christ underpins all our work and is at the heart of our service delivery. We continue to look to the life and witness of Jesus who said “I have come that they may life, and life in all its fullness” (John 10:10). Our mission team, including the Director of Mission, Associate Directors of Mission and chaplains help UnitingCare Queensland to remain true to our mission and values as an integral part of the mission of the Uniting Church in Australia.

Our team is actively engaged in identifying and interpreting the theological, missional, cultural and spiritual issues that arise within the varied contexts of our services. We are intentional about staff and volunteers being orientated and inducted with an understanding around the historical and theological nature of the Uniting Church in Australia and have developed a mission framework that is reflective of our unique place and position as a church.

Our team also gives oversight to the pastoral care and chaplaincy services that operate across a variety of our services. Chaplains have provided spiritual and pastoral support to staff, volunteers, patients, clients and their families. They have conducted services, fellowship, support groups, funerals, provided grief and loss training, prison ministry, visited clients and patients, and supported families through illness and death of loved ones. We currently have 49 chaplains, supported by nearly 200 volunteer lay chaplains or pastoral care volunteers.

Our mission team has been proactively engaged in working with Synod, presbyteries, local congregations and other agencies fostering strong relationships with the view to identify opportunities in partnership together as “one church”. The role of our directors of mission, chaplains and volunteers continues to be critical to our staff, our clients and our communities. They keep us anchored in the mission of the church and help ensure the spiritual heart of the organisation beats strong amongst the rapidly changing environment we seek to be responsive to as a church.

## Proposal

It is proposed that the 33rd Synod receive this report.

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### Contact for report questions:

Name: Sarah Lim  
Position: Director, Office of the CEO  
Email: sarah.lim@ucareqld.com.au Phone: 325 34060



# #realunitingchurch

## Report from



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## Context

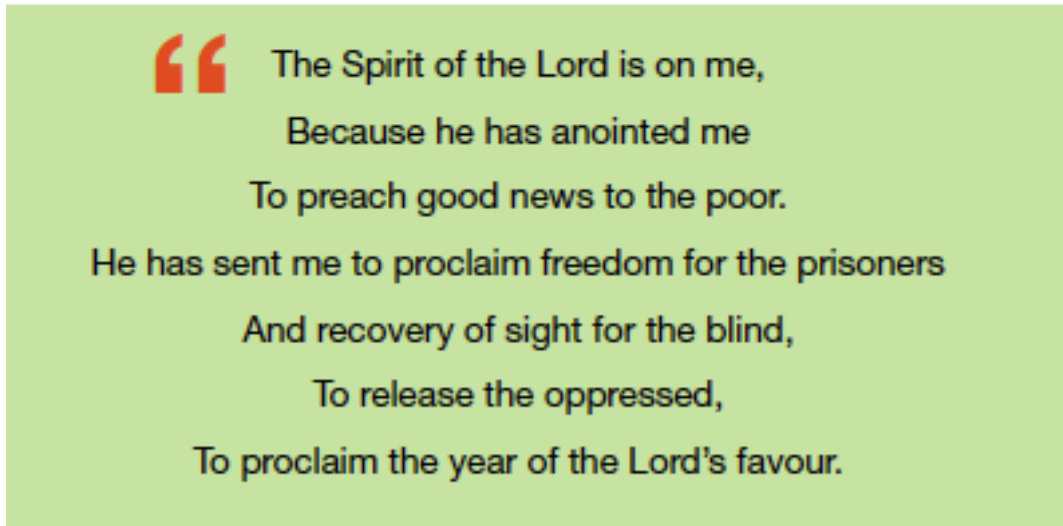
Wesley Mission Queensland (WMQ) is an integral part of the Uniting Church in Queensland and operates as a mission activity of the Albert Street Uniting Church. Since its inception in 1907 WMQ's **purpose has been to participate in the mission of God towards reconciliation, transformation, justice and hope for all people.** In and through this mission and ministry we are actively committed to 'Uniting in Christ, acting with love, witnessing in faith and working for justice'. Each year WMQ's services touch the lives of more than 100,000 people in Queensland and Australia-wide as we support members of the deaf community and their families through our Auslan interpreting services.

Since the 32nd Synod we have transitioned our name from Wesley Mission Brisbane to Wesley Mission Queensland. With more than 60 locations across South East Queensland, our name change better reflects our geographical reach and provides greater clarity for people connecting with our organisation. This is a change in name only. There has been no change to the delivery of our services and the support we currently provide or our day-to-day operations.

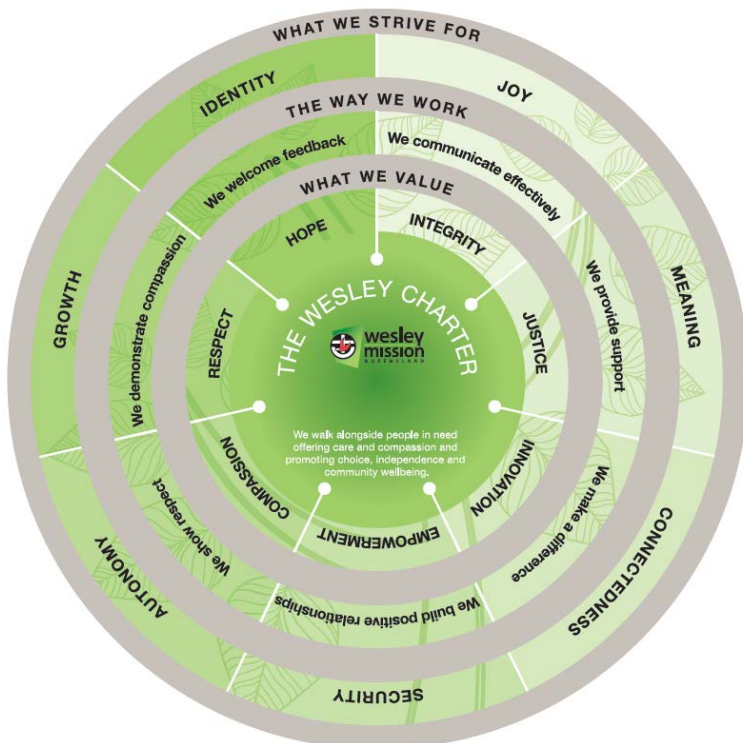
# What we are called to do

Our mission remains ***to walk alongside people in need, offering care and compassion and promoting choice, independence and community wellbeing.*** WMQ is built on the values of hope, justice, integrity, compassion, empowerment, innovation and respect.

In 2017 the foundational statements of WMQ (Purpose, Vision and Mission) are derived from an understanding of the message of the Gospels that reveals the person of Jesus Christ inviting God’s people into a spirit-inspired movement of transformation, reconciliation and hope for all people. Jesus takes up Isaiah 61:1-2 as his mission statement (Luke 4:18-19; Isaiah 61:1-2).



## WMQ culture - The Wesley Charter



The Wesley Charter sits at the core of all we do. The charter exemplifies that our Christian mission, vision and values indeed have “life” and are lived well throughout our organisation. The charter describes “who we are”, “whose we are” and “what we do” and how we provide care with ***compassion, respect, hope, integrity, justice, innovation and empowerment*** to those entrusted to our care. The value of the charter is also in its capacity to create conversations throughout the organisation that focus on our Purpose, Mission and Values — these conversations enhance the organisational culture at the heart of who we are and why we exist.

WMQ and the services we provide are diverse and special. As a faith-based organisation we believe everyone is important and God’s love is for everyone. Each day we interact with thousands of people, all of whom have different goals, views, beliefs, backgrounds, abilities and, most importantly, are in need of our help.

# Organisational snapshot – our services

## Aged Care

- Residential Aged Care • Retirement Living • In-home Care
- Centre and Community-based Transport • Allied Health • Respite and Wellness

## Disability and Mental Health

- Art from the Margins • Disability Support • Supported Accommodation • Respite and Wellness
- Mental Health Support and Accommodation • Supported Employment • Sign Language Services

## Hardship Relief

- NILS • Counselling and Personal Support • Housing Support • Community Meal

## Child Care, Youth and Families

- Centre-based Care • In-home Care • Family Day Care • Hummingbird House • Youth Housing
- Family Support

## Education and Employment

- MailpaQ • Career Keys

What began in **1907**  
 in the heart of Brisbane at the Albert Street Methodist church has grown into one of Queensland's largest community service organisations supporting **more than 100,000** Queenslanders every year

**We have 5** supported accommodation communities that offer age-appropriate housing to **44** adults living with a disability

**14** ADULTS living with mental health concerns live at the Clear Breeze Apartments

**Albert Street Uniting Church is our spiritual home** We run weekly worship services **4** interpreters working across the country supporting the Deaf community **THERE ARE 540**

**600** people in need receive a free meal, sandwich or food parcel each week  
**WE HAVE 3** partnerships with the Youngcare charity

**We have 13** residential aged care homes that are home to **1,000** residents

**1,338** children attend our **4** child care centres, In Home Child Care and Family Day Care services  
**WE SUPPORT** youth, families, the unemployed and people doing it tough through our **80** community service programs  
**60** people living with a disability have a secure job at our Australian Government enterprise MailpaQ

**We have 2** retirement living communities that are home to **530** retirees

This would not be possible without our **2,500** dedicated staff and our **1,500** volunteers, and our supporters and donors  
 you are the reason we can make a difference in the community.

# Our focus over the past 18 months

## 1.1 WMQ continues to grow in response to people in need

WMQ has an annual operating budget of \$170m+ and each year we invest on average an additional \$30m+ in our capital redevelopment program.

In addition to seeking to grow our core services in supporting our elders in the community we also seek to focus on 'unmet need' in the community. Hummingbird House (supporting children with life-limiting conditions and their families through respite and end-of-life care in a home-like environment) is an example of this.

### **Support for older Australians**

We have a clear path of growing our support services through renewing some of our older residential aged care buildings. Our emphasis is on creating and enhancing integrated and inter-generational communities. The value and potential of these communities is clearly demonstrated at our largest campus at Wheller Gardens Chermside where we have 500 retirees living at Wheller on the Park (many of whom access our in-home care and allied health services); 360 elders in residential aged care; Hummingbird House supporting children and families; a childcare centre for staff and members of the community (the children visit and spend time with elders in residential aged care); and Auslan interpreting services (offered Australia-wide). It is wonderful to see how the members of the Wheller Gardens community seek to support each other!

In the 40th year since the establishment of the Uniting Church we are also celebrating the 40th year since the opening of our second largest campus (Sinnamon Village at Sinnamon Park). Sinnamon Village comprises residential aged care for 360 elders, Youngcare apartments for young to middle-aged adults with high and complex care needs, and a therapy centre and hydrotherapy pool supporting people to live active healthy lifestyles.

We have master-planned a staged redevelopment process for this site and commenced the development of a new 144-place residential aged care home called Dovetree, respite centre and allied health precinct. We are shortly to commence the development of the new Rosemount Retirement Community comprising 135 high-quality apartments.

### **Partnership with the Chinese Christian Council (CCC) Three-Self Patriotic Movement**

WMQ has been participating in the Uniting Church in Australia and UnitingWorld partnership with the CCC for four years. This is part of our commitment to support God's mission both in Australia and overseas.

The CCC represents and supports the protestant Christian church in its mission and ministry development across China including more than 24 million people actively involved in their local congregations and communities. The partnership between the CCC and the Uniting Church has been formed around seeking to collaborate and grow connection around three main areas: theological dialogue and exchange, cultural exchange and supporting teaching and learning in aged care and social services in both countries.

In May 2017 WMQ's third visit to China took place. Six staff from our residential aged care services and our chief executive officer Geoff Batkin travelled to China to lead two further cultural exchange and training opportunities with a particular focus on supporting aged care service development. The partnership is highly regarded by the CCC and the many churches and Chinese aged care staff who attend the training and development sessions. WMQ staff benefit greatly as we learn about a new and different cultural context and witness the love and compassion that are demonstrated by the staff and leaders of the CCC towards the elders in their care. It is amazing to be part of the worship services of the CCC where upwards of 5,000 people participate on a Sunday morning in one of the many local congregations.

In August 2017 a group of church leaders and aged care home managers from the CCC visited UnitingCare aged care services in NSW and WMQ and Blue Care services in Queensland. It is expected the relationship between the CCC and the Uniting Church will be further developed in the coming years.

## 1.2 Partnerships and collaborations with Uniting Church congregations

**Wherever we can, we seek to work in collaborative partnerships with congregations where there is a shared mission call.**

As part of our ongoing focus to work together with congregations and presbyteries, the placement of the Rev Alison Cox to the position of Project Officer Disability Inclusion Innovation has commenced within WMQ. The focus of this ministry is on developing viable social enterprises for young people with disabilities leaving high school education and seeking meaningful work opportunities. As much as possible we are seeking to collaborate with Uniting Church congregations to explore these opportunities as part of their ministry in their community.

WMQ's intent is to respond to those in need and collaborate with Uniting Church congregations and presbyteries to engage in mission in a local context. One of the ways we are doing this is to explore partnerships where congregations might have under-utilised church land that could be developed for supported accommodation for people living with disabilities or as an office for our child and family support programs.

Examples of this shared mission partnership approach include:

### **Maroochydore Uniting Church partnership**

We are committed to the development of supported accommodation for adults with high care needs living in two five-bedroom houses to be constructed next door to the Maroochydore Uniting Church. This will enhance the mission and ministry of the congregation as well as the welcome and hospitality that can be offered to people living in supported accommodation.

### **Lifeworks Uniting Church Toowoomba partnership**

We are exploring a partnership with Lifeworks Uniting Church at Toowoomba to look at opportunities to provide both supported accommodation to younger people requiring high and complex care as well as the potential for developing affordable housing.

WMQ is also exploring potential for collaborative mission approaches with a number of other Uniting Church congregations including Beenleigh Uniting Church and Harrisville Uniting Church.

### **Newlife Uniting Church Robina**

The WMQ council has been involved in the Moreton Rivers Presbytery conversation with NewLife Uniting Church Robina about establishing a contemporary worshipping and witnessing church plant in the inner city.

## 1.3 Our commitment to reconciliation

WMQ provides a wide range of care and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in many of our services. During 2016 and 2017 we engaged in a collaborative and planned approach and commenced the journey to express our commitment to reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The RAP is currently in its final stages of approval with Reconciliation Australia.

***“WMQ’s vision for reconciliation is for all people to stand unified in an equal and inclusive future. We commit to enhancing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and celebrating diversity”.***





**Beauty in Diversity**, digital print on canvas by Luke Mallie, was commissioned for WMQ's Reconciliation Action Plan. Luke provides the following:

*We are all connected.*

*We can look to diversity of nature where the dragonfly lives in balance with the butterfly, in which we can learn how to live in balance with each other.*

*As the honey bee collects pollen from the flower for further expansion, we can learn that every one choice we make can affect others around us and teach us to make better choices to live in harmony together.*

*Nature does not dwell on the past but lives strong today to create more growth for tomorrow, therefore if we remember the past but work together today toward an all-inclusive future we can then respect and recognise the beauty of our diversity.*

*The gold pattern in the background represents the rich Indigenous history that weaves throughout this great land.*

*The intense colours of the insects and flowers represent the bright outlook of today, while the fluoro blue outlines represent the vibrancy of future prospects by working together.*

# Highlights over the past 18 months

## 2.1 Opening of John Wesley Gardens Geebung

A new 144-place residential aged care community (replacing a 90-bed facility). Features include a community café, training rooms for our Registered Training Organisation (Career Keys), spacious single, double and superior suites complete with ensuite. JWG was opened in October 2016.



## 2.2 Youngcare Coomera – additional four apartments

Additional four apartments providing supported accommodation for younger people living with high and complex care needs was completed in April 2017. Youngcare Coomera apartments are an example of another WMQ facility built on land purchased internally through the Uniting Church Living Rivers Congregation. We are looking forward to developing a shared mission approach with the intended Robina Newlife church plant and also the Blue Care Respite Centre all co-located on this site.



## 2.3 Commenced development of Dovetree new residential aged care community at Sinnamon Village

Dovetree – a new 144-bed residential aged care home including day/overnight respite, therapy centre and 150 car parks (due for completion in April 2018). This development is integral to the master planning of Sinnamon Village that will include the development of a new retirement village commencing in October 2017.



## 2.4 Harrisville rural community

WMQ was approached by the Harrisville Uniting Church to look at a concept of developing a rural retirement community including aged care, supported accommodation for younger people requiring high and complex care and possible farm stay holiday accommodation for families from Hummingbird House. Sixty acres of land in Harrisville was purchased by WMQ in January 2017. We are now actively exploring the development options for this property over 2017 and 2018. We hope the vision will become a reality as we navigate complex planning approval processes and business approvals through the WMQ Board and the Synod.



*Hummingbird House also offers Maddy's mum and dad a chance to rediscover small things that may be taken for granted.*

*"Every single moment we have shared at Hummingbird House has been special. For the first time in years, Maddy was able to have a bath with her little brother and not in just a regular bath but this fancy bath with spa jets, lights and music. The look on their faces as they splashed in the water with the colour changing lights, giggling and moving to the beat of Michael Jackson, is a memory that will stay with us forever. For the first time in a very long time, Madelyn and her brother were able to enjoy something that most young siblings do together but had been impossible for us up until that moment. Sometimes it's the small things that end up being the big things!"*



## **2.6 Rosemount Retirement Community (Sinnamon Village)**

To be built in two stages (total of 135 retirement living apartments) with an expected start date in October 2017 and completion date in 2019.



## 2.7 Art from the Margins (AFTM) – celebrating 10 years

Art from the Margins is a creative mission activity of the WMQ Albert Street Church. It began with a conversation ... an idea ... a need: finding a way to recognise and support artists living with homelessness and experiencing social isolation. The idea: to create an opportunity to show their art to the community. The Art from the Margins journey began.

The artistic director of the Brisbane Festival invited the fledgling and totally unknown AFTM to be part of the official 2008 Brisbane Festival program. The first AFTM art exhibition was held in the Albert Street Uniting Church. AFTM has remained a part of the Brisbane Festival program every year since and in September 2017 the tenth consecutive exhibition was held in Brisbane City Hall. Since 2008 more than 1,000 artists and 50 community and arts organisations have participated in the AFTM Brisbane Festival exhibition from Brisbane, regional Queensland, and interstate.

Ten years on, AFTM is embarking on the next exciting stage in its journey moving to its new home in the recently renovated heritage-listed former Wesleyan Church at 136 Brunswick Street Fortitude Valley.

Fundamental to AFTM's vision is using art and creative activity to enhance individual wellbeing, foster social engagement, build community, and to help break down the social isolation experienced by so many.

## 2.8 Wheller Gardens celebrates 80-year anniversary

On 23 November 2016 the Wheller Gardens site at Chermide celebrated its 80th anniversary. The Governor of Queensland, His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC, attended the re-enactment of the original opening day ceremony of The Garden Settlement for the aged in Chermide on 23 November 1936, and unveiled a plaque to commemorate the opening of The Betty Smith Heritage Precinct.

Four of the original Marchant Lodges from 1936 (now renovated) have become a 'living history' of The Garden Settlement (now known as Wheller Gardens) and contain information panels, photos and old household items.

'Betty' Smith MBE (Miss Ann Elizabeth Smith) was a dedicated member of the Albert Street Uniting Church. She left a significant bequest to Wesley Mission Queensland. The heritage precinct has been named to honour her charitable work and generous contribution.

The re-enactment of the original settlement day ceremony also honoured two men vital to the establishment of The Garden Settlement: the Rev Harold Manuel Wheller OBE, who at that time was the

superintendent minister of the Albert Street Methodist Church and George Marchant, a generous Brisbane philanthropist.

*'Riches and power are sacred trusts. We have nothing that is our own; everything is God's put into our hands for his service. It is nothing to have gained wealth; I have known many men who have worked as hard as I, but who are now poor. Poverty in itself is no disgrace, but riches are no cause for credit. I am only a grain of sand in the immensity of things.'*

Mr Marchant at the opening of The Garden Settlement in 1936

## 3. Synod Priority Directions

### Christ-centred, at prayer, and listening

In all our residential communities people gather to celebrate the goodness and generosity of God. Worship services reflect the diverse traditions and needs of our residents, and enable them to find joy, hope and meaning in their everyday situations. Our pastoral and spiritual care team find many opportunities to prayerfully listen as they walk alongside residents.

Albert Street Uniting Church sits at the heart of WMQ and is the central place of worship. Through worship, witness and service, the congregation continues its 170-year legacy of expressing the 'Good News' that God continues to transform the world, bringing healing and justice for all people. The church has the opportunity to receive visitors from all over the world, to share with them in worship and to embrace their difference.

The church is committed to being a welcoming community of Christ — proclaiming the Good News of Jesus the Christ, building faith and compassionately serving in mission with faithfulness, integrity and openness.

### Discipleship

In looking forward to the next 10 years, the WMQ Albert Street congregation has identified a number of strategic priorities which will continue to link the congregation with the wider community and provide opportunities for members to exercise their discipleship as they offer compassion and hope to others. As well as serving people who have been disadvantaged by life, the congregation is looking for other opportunities to connect with young adults, people from overseas, and those who work in the city.

The Albert Street congregation continues to be actively involved in three distinct programs established under the WMQ Servant Network banner:

**Art from the Margins (AFTM)** began to enable artists experiencing disadvantage to exhibit their art. A simple concept has grown into a ministry which empowers artists to become self-confident and worthwhile contributors to society. AFTM has been instrumental in bringing artists together and bridging the gap between artists living in isolation and the wider public community.

**The community meal** has expanded from providing one meal a week to offering services three times a week, (one in conjunction with St Andrew's congregation) plus providing meals for families in Ronald McDonald House. Over 150 volunteers a week, from all walks of life, offer themselves in service through this ministry.

**English Corner** provides the opportunity for non-English speakers to come together with English teachers and enjoy conversation using the gospel message as the medium. Many friendships are made across cultural groups as well as having the opportunity to explore Australian culture in a safe environment.

Many WMQ community services arise from an unaddressed need in the community, and many of these services are mission-focussed and not entirely funded through government funding.

## Connecting with communities

One of WMQ's strategic priorities is "Responding to people in need and strengthening the communities in which we operate".

In addition to the wide range of services for children, young people and families we support and sponsor a range of community development activities to enhance the resilience of people in their own communities.

### **Logan Housing and Homelessness Symposium 2017**

The Logan Housing and Homelessness Network (LHHN) held the Housing and Homelessness Symposium in May with a focus on collaboration, community and inclusion; showcasing innovative housing models and collaborative models of practice. The aim of the symposium was to connect the dots; providing opportunities to engage with new initiatives and support current initiatives for the region which could potentially enhance options for people across all ages experiencing housing stress, at risk of homelessness or homeless.

On the day we had over 140 attendees from government and non-government organisations and the community. There were presentations from an exciting range of speakers including talks on 'Tiny houses', supporting people living with mental illness from WMQ's Clear Breeze Apartments, representatives from University of Queensland discussing research on tenants choosing to 'down size' to purpose-built social housing, and representatives from QCOSS and QShelter presenting around broader issues for people who are marginalised in our community.

During the morning we greatly appreciated Uncle Noel's welcome to country and the Aboriginal cultural dancers who assisted in opening the event.



### **Youth Week 2017**

The few weeks leading up to the Easter break were hectic and just prior to the break we saw flooding in the Logan area that broke records and saw families and the community devastated. WMQ were the lead agency to hold a family event in Eagleby for Youth Week 2017 which saw 15 non-government and government services work together to put on a fantastic event.

Over 500 people attended and we saw some smiles on faces who hadn't smiled in a little while. Although the theme of the event was to bring the community together to celebrate Youth Week and show the youth of the area what a great community they belong to and how many services they can access, it became

much more than this. We were able to have one of our young people from our program offer his time to volunteer for the day and throughout the day he recruited other friends from the area to help. This was a huge achievement for this young man as he struggles with concentration, impulse control and following directions. We had a range of families who provided great feedback about the day and comments such as “this is such a great event, we wish our community came together more often like this, it is fabulous to see”. We were also approached to support some families who were hit hard in the floods and so once the ‘party’ was over our staff piled into the van and delivered much-needed food and resources.

### **Elorac Place Community Centre at Ellen Grove**

Over the past 18 months Elorac Place has provided a range of support programs for the local community including but not limited to food support, young women’s housing program and emergency relief. In partnership with other programs, activities provided and supported have been:

- A multicultural women’s group – Community Women
- Playgroup – Playgroup Queensland
- Afternoon youth activity in the park – PCYC Inala
- Mother’s Day high tea
- Employment workshop – Max Employment, Access Employment
- Disability music therapy
- Zumba – Gold Program – Brisbane City Council.

Joint programs with other services include NAIDOC celebrations in the park, wall mural in the park, Harmony Day activities.

### **Ellen Grove 20/20**

Ellen Grove 20/20 is a program supported by Wesley Mission Queensland in partnership with a range of other community, local and state government service providers to improve the outcomes for people living in this low socio-economic and underprivileged area.

## **Youth, children and families**

At the last Synod WMQ reported on the opening of two special new services; Hummingbird House, Queensland’s only children’s hospice and Asher House, supported accommodation for young people living with a disability or an acquired brain injury (built on Uniting Church land). Both these services are now fully operational. Below are some stories and feedback provided by families:

*Hummingbird House is now a reality. In the past 12 months we have moved in, brought together a team of dedicated experts, and most importantly, welcomed families through our doors.*

*The first year has seen many firsts: families have been given an opportunity to reconnect, precious moments have blossomed into life-long memories and all of our guests have experienced the warm embrace of Hummingbird House.*

*We’ve also been busy since officially opening our doors last October; we’ve had some talented visitors and held a party or two — all whilst delivering care in a home-like environment.*

*Staff, guests and families were entertained by the acrobats and jugglers from Cirque du Soleil “Kooza,” who taught our guests to balance peacock feathers, juggle, and hula hoop. It is very clear that there is a lot of hidden talent at Hummingbird House.*



*Aside from acrobats and circus performers, we also took the time to give a very special little boy a birthday party experience.*

*His parents wanted a beach party, with just a touch of Australian wildlife. We were even able to find some crocodiles in the wilds of Chermside. Hummingbird House opened its doors to this little boy, his family, friends and the team from Lady Cilento Children's Hospital for an afternoon of memories and family time.*

**Asher House:** *"There's a saying, that you can judge a community by how it treats its most vulnerable citizens. The people for whom this accommodation is being provided are some of our most vulnerable citizens, but through this facility we will give them the dignity and the respect they deserve, the opportunity to live the lives they want to live, and the ability to fulfil their own dreams and aspirations."*

*Asher House is defined by its wonderful people — both the staff and volunteers who have committed to serving these residents, and the residents themselves, some of whom have been living together in supported accommodation for 24 years.*

*One of these residents is Matthew. Matthew has 'locked-in syndrome' since his stroke in 2010. "He can't speak and he can't move, but he's fully awake and aware. He's got fully functional capabilities," says his twin sister Maureen, who believes Asher House represents a new lease on life for her brother.*

*"I think once he settles in, it will take a lot of worry off my shoulders. Just knowing that this is a permanent home for him, and that people are here for him, and he has a lot of space ... I hope that with the staff employed here, they can bring that social aspect as well. The staffing options with Wesley Mission Queensland are terrific. There are one or two staff for every four residents, so it's a great model of care.*

*"Knowing that he's got a home now, it means our visits can be more structured. At the moment, I do things for him — I talk to him and I feed him — but we rarely get to sit together and just watch a movie. I'm hoping now that can change."*

*Matthew moved to Asher House on 26 July into one of 12 fantastic apartments purpose-built for sustainability and co-designed by architects, residents and their families. It has been a long journey, and each resident has faced a lifetime of challenge to get there, but Matthew, finally, is home.*

WMQ is one of the largest providers of youth services in the South East Queensland region. We operate a range of youth services out of the following areas; Robina, Logan City, Eagleby, Ellen Grove, Coomera, Pacific Pines, Inala, Woodridge, Beenleigh, Southport, Runaway Bay and Palm Beach.

We operate four childcare centres, in-home care and family day-care programs. Three of our childcare centres are co-located with Uniting Church congregations. A crèche service at Mabel Park High School provides onsite childcare and case management for pregnant or parenting students at Mabel Park High School.

***Where there is a mission need, the Lord leads us.***

## 4. Challenges/risks as we progress

### 4.1 Government reform agenda

We are in one of the most profound periods of reform and structural change within the aged care and community services sectors experienced over the last 30 years. As a leading community services organisation, we must understand and prepare for these challenges so that we can position ourselves to respond, mitigate risk, be sustainable and continue to pursue our Purpose, Mission and Vision.

In spite of economic growth and prosperity in Australia over the past decade, there are almost half a million Queenslanders living in poverty and a significant decline in the equity of opportunity and distribution of wealth across our society, particularly the rural areas of our state and amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The ageing of our population will in time mean that there are fewer people in the workforce as a proportion of our overall population. The implication (in the absence of major structural taxation changes) is that there will be a smaller tax revenue to fund support services for older Australians and those living with disability.

These trends are driving the government reform process which is characterised by:

- Government funding restrictions — expectations of service providers doing ‘more with less’. Due to changes in the Age Care Funding Instrument announced and being implemented our funding for residential aged care will be reduced by upwards of \$5m per annum by 2019.
- Consumer-directed care (CDC) — giving more choice and control to the people accessing services to choose what services they utilise and who provides the services. Funding will be made available to ‘consumers’ rather than being given to providers.
- User pays — where people can afford to pay/contribute to the services they use, they should be expected to do so.
- An expectation that market competition (the ‘market’) and to some extent market consolidation (of service providers) will improve efficiency and effectiveness of services.
- Within aged care services consideration is being given to ‘uncapping supply’ of services based on assessed need. In other words, when a person is assessed as needing a high level of in-home care support they can choose a provider rather than having to wait for the next available high level package. Opening up supply in residential aged care is also being considered by government.
- Funding for outcomes rather than funding for services provided.

#### WMQ response

The increasing pace of change is the new ‘norm’. Organisations such as WMQ need to organise and be positioned to both anticipate and be agile and innovative in responding to change. Over the past few years we have been undertaking internal renewal and reform processes that have been evolutionary rather than revolutionary. What is vital is that our staff are supported through the change and maintain trust, confidence and pride in the organisation of which they are a part. This is essential as our staff are the hands, the voice, the heart and front line of all that we do.

### 4.2 Supporting people to live well (active, healthy and engaged) lifestyles

#### WMQ response

So much of the WMQ Service Charter and service offering is focussed on older people living active, healthy and engaged lifestyles where they have opportunities to give and receive and be part of a supportive community.

Our integrated and inter-generational communities at Wheller Gardens and Sinnamon Village are examples of how this approach can make such a difference. At Sinnamon Village we operate a

hydrotherapy pool where many hundreds of people from the community are building fitness, agility and balance through both hydrotherapy and planned gym programs.

At Wheller on the Park Community for Retirement there are more than 40 resident-sponsored community clubs which enhance community building and areas of common interest for the 500 residents.

### 4.3 National Disability Insurance Scheme

There has been a welcome change in government and the wider community approach to supporting people living with disability and their carers. The progressive implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme across Queensland (from 2018 onwards) will mean improved access to services and support for people living with disabilities. However, in many aspects of implementation of the access and systems supporting the roll-out there have been significant issues which are frustrating for people with disabilities.

#### WMQ response

WMQ has been planning for the NDIS roll-out for some time and has developed considerable expertise in providing support services and care services for people living with disabilities and mental illness.

We have been seeking to work collaboratively with congregations to identify sites (attached to a congregation) where services for people with disabilities can be part of the congregation's engagement with the local community.

### 4.4 Having the right staff, at the right time with the skills and commitment to provide care and support

One of our biggest challenges over the next five years as we respond to our ageing population and the roll-out of the NDIS is about building, supporting and sustaining our workforce. The fastest growing sector in terms of workforce demand in the Australian community over the next five years is in health, aged care and disability services.

#### WMQ response

Key to responding to this challenge is the reputation of the organisation as a service provider and employer. We have developed a multi-faceted planned approach to this challenge which is being implemented. One part of the strategy is operating and developing our internal Registered Training Organisation. For example, when we open our new aged care community (Dovetree at Sinnamon Village) we will need 150 additional staff. Preparing for our future staffing requirements remains a significant challenge!

## Proposal

It is proposed that the 33rd Synod receive this report

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### Contact for report questions:

Name: Geoff Batkin  
Position: Chief Executive Officer, Wesley Mission Queensland  
Email: g.batkin@wmq.org.au Phone (07) 3621 4546

Name: Rev Lyn Burden  
Position: Superintendent Minister Wesley Mission Queensland  
Email: l.burden@wmq.org.au Phone (07) 3031 3031