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**HOPE**  
SYNOD 36



Report from

# Moreton Rivers Presbytery



# Report

## Context

We are Moreton Rivers Presbytery on the land of Turrabul, Jagera, Waka Waka and Gubbi Gubbi nations. We are 36 Congregations with over 25 Chaplains and ministry agents serving in Synod, Agencies, Schools, Hospitals and the ADF.

Our mission is to encourage and equip God's People for God's Mission. We value being outward focussed, generously collaborative, strengths-based and permission-giving. We tell the good news stories of what God is already doing amongst us and encourage Spirit-led innovation and risk-taking. We serve our Congregations, Faith Communities and Ministry Agents according to the Roles and Responsibilities of a Presbytery, exercising particular oversight over congregations exhorting them to fulfil their high calling in Christ Jesus.

### ***Tell us what your key priorities since the last Synod have been.***

Our Strategic Priorities since the last Synod have been about developing Healthy Ministry by

- Checking and Supporting Health of Ministry Agents and Church Councils and their relationships
- Supporting Ministry Agents
- Continuing to run key Youth and Children's events
- Healthy Ministry was our intentional first step as we move towards the overall aim of flourishing communities.
- Growing our Ministry Capacity by
- Continue to invest in Leadership
- Developing capacity of Church Councils
- Piloting our Congregational Health and Vitality Process for
- Expanding Youth and Children's Ministry through Easter Madness, Grit and Grace and inter-generational faith formation

As we have engaged in this work, participated in Project Plenty and consulted our congregations, this has been the foundation for us then develop our draft Strategic Vision to 2025.

## Shared Life, Flourishing Communities

### ***In what ways have you been approaching the challenge of making disciples of Jesus?***

#### ***Tell us about how you are building a discipling culture***

- Supporting and Encouraging congregations in their discipling initiatives and promoting those to the wider presbytery

- Supporting new Discipling initiatives
- Investing in training such as Learning for Living
- Keeping Discipling a focus at Presbytery meetings, including guest speakers and people sharing Good News stories
- Our pilot Congregational Health and Vitality Process has a key focus around discipling
- All our Youth and Children's events are focused on discipling young people and their leaders

***Tell us about how you are engaging children, youth, young adults and families***

- Grit and grace, Easter Madness, Day Camp, Ba Dae Ya, Youth Combine
- Intergenerational resources for use in the congregation and other settings
- Safe ministry training, supporting congregational youth and childrens' leaders
- Leadership pathways for young people and young Adults
- Sharing YCMC with The Gap UCA to build the capacity of Night Church

***Tell us how you are reimagining the identity and posture of the church, in your community, in a changing world***

Both Healthy Ministry check-up and Congregational Health and Vitality process invite congregations and ministers to reflect honestly about nature of ministry mission and their relationships to enable flourishing. Sometimes this means bringing difficult things to the surface, which then has been addressed.

- Culture of honest self-reflection so we are pro-active rather than reactive
- Congregational survey of their priorities for Ministry and Mission
- Reviewed Presbytery strategic plan and developed a new plan in response for future
- Promote the fact that we live in a changing world and need to adapt
- Church council conversations and training
- Encourage Ministers to share and collaborate.

***In what ways have you been drawn into Transforming your Community?***

***Tell us about how you have responded to the rising challenge of wellbeing and mental health support***

- A focus on ministry agent health and wellbeing by promoting wellbeing and healthy ministry gatherings,
- Promoting Ministers support such as EAP and SAAP,
- Promoting opportunities to raise the capacity of congregation members to respond to trauma and mental health issues through psychological first aid training

***Tell us about your commitment to the Uniting Church's ongoing work of covenanting with First Peoples***

- Continuing to work with and support Zillmere UAICC, including Zillmere UAICC presenting ministry vision to the Presbytery meeting
- Supporting local congregations to build links with UAICC and First Nations issues

***In what ways have you been sought to reshape your part of the Synod, to be Fit for Purpose and wise stewards of all that God has given you?***

***Tell us about changes you have made (to systems, policies, technologies, governance) that has brought life and freedom into processes that had become stuck or burdensome***

We continually seek to reform practise:

- Reformatted resourcing committee to mission resourcing focus
- Reformed committee work to ensure connected to Strategy
- Connected office staff to mission by linking with Committees
- Keeping committees mission-focused

***Tell us about the pain points you identified in your operations that need to be addressed in the next season***

- Increasing compliance load
- Presbytery as the interface between synod and congregations - taking up time, triangulations, complex communications

***Tell us about how you have stewarded your property and assets to best facilitate healthy and vital mission in your part of the Synod***

- Have property redevelopment plan to ensure Presbytery able not only to be financially self-sustainable to support new mission initiatives
- Unfortunately, plans on hold due to multiple heritage listings of Church buildings that are not being used or applicable to mission of Church

***Tell us about how you have sought to identify, develop and release leaders to participate in the ongoing work of the church***

- See youth and children's pathways listed above
- Developing creative new ways for people to engage in ministry
- promote training opportunities

***In what ways have you sought to collaborate with others across the Uniting Church as an expression of our commitment to doing Life Together?***

***Tell us about ways in which you have both benefited from and contributed to other parts of the Church***

Moreton Rivers Presbytery continues to give generously to the work of the wider Uniting Church, with over 50% of congregational CPMP contributions going to support work in Indigenous, Rural and Remote Communities

MRP continues to work collaboratively with Synod, other Presbyteries and UnitingCare as we seek to engage in the mission of God together

***Tell us about where you see relational tensions that need to be addressed over the next season***

There are always tensions about how the different Councils of the UCA relate to each other and the responsibilities and resourcing needed for each. However, while there continue to be tensions on particular issues, overall, there is a willingness to work together for the sake of mission.

## Threats and opportunities as we step into the future together

The phrase 'May you live in Interesting Times!' can be received as a blessing or a curse. In fact, we are experiencing it as both! There is no doubt that COVID, Climate Change (as seen in the recent floods) and Global Political Instability affects the world we live and do ministry in and greatly adds to everyone's stress as we constantly seek to adapt. However, these crises also help us to reflect on what we considered 'normal' to reveal to us the need for change.

Moreton Rivers Presbytery is developing a vision to 2025 that encourages us as a presbytery to invest in discipling people, growing leaders and supporting new missional initiatives. We believe that as we focus on empowering and equipping God's people for God's mission in a changing world that God's Spirit will flow and bring life, growth and transformation in our churches and communities.

## Proposals to the 36th Synod

It is proposed that the 36<sup>th</sup> Synod receive this report.

## Contact for report questions

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