

Report for **31st Queensland Synod** October 2014



Report from **Bremer Brisbane Presbytery**



Context:

The Bremer Brisbane Presbytery exercises oversight of the mission of the church in the western suburbs of Brisbane and the West Moreton region. This area includes districts of significant population growth, areas identified for future growth, and suburbs undergoing urban renewal.

Responses to our Priority Directions since last Synod

Enabling a demonstrated commitment to the shared Call and Vision

- Implementation of a presbytery-wide strategic planning process
- Resourcing church councils in oversight tools and processes
- Pastoral support, conflict management, extra resourcing of ministers and congregations in times of stress and crisis and in exploring opportunities for ministry and mission
- Implementation of the Period of Discernment (POD) and Pastor Ministries, particularly focussed on appreciation of the Uniting Church in Australia as a part of the church catholic
- Ministry with children and young people, particularly around participation in Uniting Church in Australia activities.

Working towards our Priority Directions in the future

- The strategic planning process identified five themes: *Forming disciples for Christ; Building sustainable Christian communities; Being organised for mission; Identifying, fostering and resourcing leaders; Resourcing community engagement*. Operational planning on these themes has been completed and implementation has begun
- A part-time position has been established to resource the development of congregations as discipling communities and the promotion of POD
- Resources have been developed for church councils so that they can better fulfil their oversight role.

Responses to our Priority Directions since last Synod

Promoting a discipline of prayer and spirituality (individual and corporate)

Intentional pastoral and prayer ministry: retreats, short courses, the promotion of the Stillpoint Centre.

Working towards our Priority Directions in the future

- The further development of resources for spiritual direction and the promotion of POD, particularly among young adults
- The development of access to wider church activities such as School of Discipleship.

Responses to our Priority Directions since last Synod

Developing sustainable mission orientated organisation (way of being) for the Church in Queensland

- Delegations from Presbytery in Plenary to committees and subcommittees have been clearly defined and articulated
- The development of a Presbytery office and training space
- Clear knowledge of property assets in terms of optimisation and potential
- The inclusion of Child Safe Church responsibilities with the Presbytery youth worker role
- The finalisation of a Presbytery Archive System
- The development of a new Presbytery website
- The ongoing review of regions within the Presbytery, particularly in regards to how the Uniting Church in Australia is present in these regions.

Working towards our Priority Directions in the future

- The further deployment of capital assets to growth areas
- The further development of Presbytery office management systems
- The deployment of management tools to oversee the work of church councils
- Feedback and review loops with key stakeholders (Synod, congregations) regarding the deployment of the strategic plan
- Addressing succession issues in critical congregational placements.

Responses to our Priority Directions since last Synod

Facilitating renewal of leadership for the mission of the Church

- The development of the Pastoral Dialogue Program
- The implementation of the Healthy Church Review process
- The work of the Presbytery youth worker in resourcing leadership
- Pilgrim courses
- POD promotion.

Working towards our Priority Directions in the future

- The further development of Continuing Education for Ministry (CEM) monitoring
- Short courses and resources for church council officers and members
- The development of position descriptions for Presbytery roles
- Resourcing the development of ministerial leadership, for example short courses.

Responses to our Priority Directions since last Synod

Engaging in opportunities for intentional, open community connections and partnerships

- The deployment of a church planter/community development worker in the Lockyer Valley
- The development of “The Bike Project” at Carole Park State School in partnership with UnitingCare Community
- The promotion and support of the Queensland Community Alliance
- A course on training ministers and church councillors on community engagement planning
- Presbytery meetings with speakers on topical subjects such as the challenges facing agriculture and family farming.

Working towards our Priority Directions in the future

- Fostering partnership between Uniting Church in Australia agencies and congregational ministry
- Further development of the Queensland Community Alliance
- Further development of congregational participation in ministry with at-risk youth in partnership with Wesley Mission Brisbane

- More congregations taking up the responsibility to discern, plan, and deploy resources for community engagement.
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Key achievements/initiatives

- The appointment of a church planter/community development worker in the Lockyer Valley
- The purchase of land at Ellen Grove as the future site for a regional church in South West Brisbane
- The building of a new worship centre at Fernvale.

Challenges/risks as we progress:

- The deployment of the strategic plan
- Transitioning new Presbytery leadership
- The capacity to appoint quality leadership for new work and redevelopment
- The availability of suitable capable ministerial leadership for placements with particular challenges/opportunities
- Master planning of new communities means traditional methods of church planting will not work
- The capacity for Presbytery and church councils to adequately respond to compliance issues.

Recommendations/strategic decisions for Synod:

Requests that the Synod direct the Synod Standing Committee initiates a review of the placements process to seek to deal with issues such as:

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

Contact for report questions:

Name: Dr. John Roulston AM

email: presmin@bremerbrisbane.org.au

phone: 0417 667 671