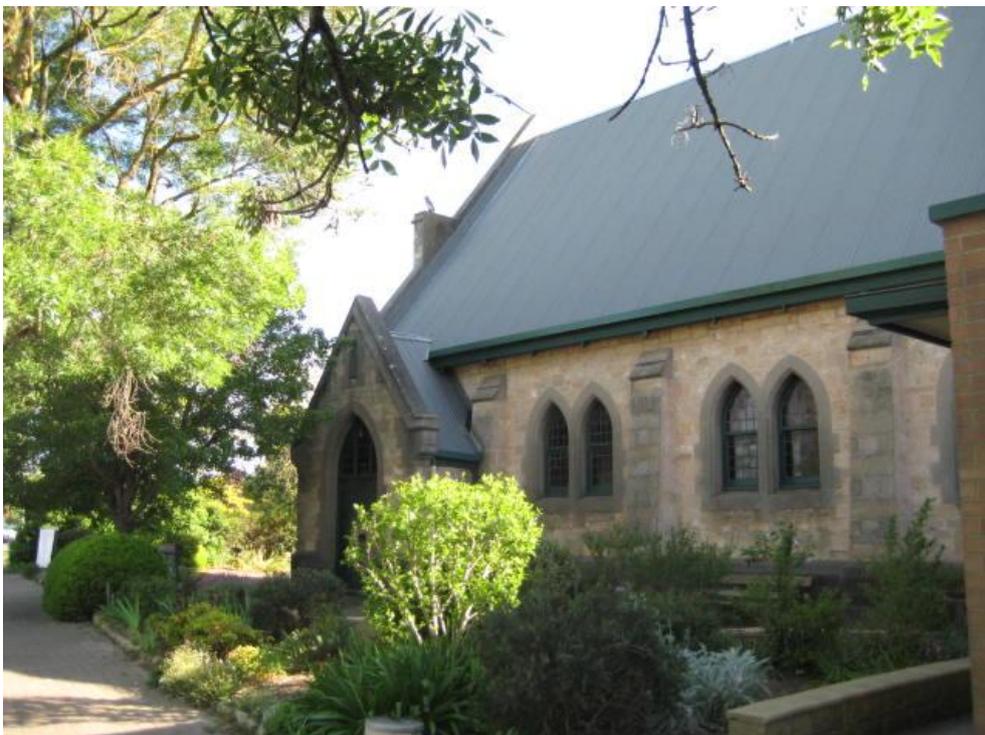




# ***BLACKWOOD UNITING CHURCH***



**If you are collecting this copy before the meeting, please ensure that you bring it back with you on the day of the meeting. Thank you**

## ***MEETING of the CONGREGATION***

### ***Sunday November 22nd 2009***

# Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup> Congregational Meeting Agenda

## Blackwood Uniting Church 11am

Apologies  
Minutes of AGM of congregation 17.05.09  
Matters Arising: Pg 3

### Spoken Reports

Minister's Reports	Leanne Jenski, Ian Hunter	P.12
Church Council	Ewan Hazeldine	P.13
Finance	Ray Bown,	P.15
Elders and Lay Ministry	David Agnew	P.20

Reflection on spoken reports

### Tabled Reports

Property	Graham Brown	Pg22
Inter-Church Council	Gloria McArthur	Pg23
Beacon	Gloria McArthur	Pg23
Community Program & Shed	Janet Maschmedt	Pg24
Library Services	Joy Belling	Pg25
Mission and Justice	A. Blake, C. Megaw, E. Ninnis	Pg26
Urban Mission Network	Wendy Norris	Pg27
11am Congregation	Mary Thomas	Pg27
Synod	Christa Megaw , Tim Lee	
YAG		

Reflection on Tabled reports

Election of Elders and Church Council Members and Secretary of Congregation  
Next Meeting; May 2010

Benediction: Ministers

# **Minutes of the Blackwood Uniting Church Congregational Meeting**

**Sunday May 17 2009**

**Meeting commenced at 11:10am**

1. Attendance:

- As per attendance sheets. Present: 69 Apologies: 20

2. Opening prayer by Wendy Norris.

3. Minutes from AGM, 16.11.08

- No matters arising.
- Passed unanimously by consensus cards.

4. Reports

1) Ministers' reports:

- Ian's as tabled. No questions arising.
- Leanne's report
  - a) This is a wonderful community to work with & be part of. Meetings with Rob Stoner about community development are continuing.
  - b) Began her Masters this year. Her focus is gaining insight into women in mission, evangelism & outreach. Could take 4 years to complete.

2) Church Council report:

- Ewan Hazeldine referred to the tabled report.
- He added that this involvement has been interesting & cited the time, energy & fun involved in responding to developing a balanced budget for 2010. He emphasized the need for a mission focus.

**The 6 Mission Emphases**

The following new mission emphases were identified at the Congregational Planning Day on 21 March. It is intended that these be undertaken in the context of, and celebrated with, the current life and work of the Church.

**Attractional Activities**

- Inspiring worship: maintaining; time/structure of worship; need to preserve the special intention & focus of both faith communities
- Welcoming atmosphere: in all church gatherings, intentional follow-up of newcomers
- Raising our profile: communication with community - signage, website

**Formation**

- Discipleship: equipping for the journey to be faithful/active disciples of Jesus - Bible study; people of Bible & hope; discipling program; personal devotion

## **Incarnational Activities**

- Open church buildings: coffee, soup, BBQ, inviting worship, playgroup
- Community need: identifying pockets of unmet need in local community & responding – marginalised, environmental impact etc

### **A Mission-based Approach to Budgeting**

The mission-based budget process is one in which the Congregation looks to its proposed mission and asks: “Do we believe enough in this to find how we can pay for it?” This is in contrast to a traditional line-item budget approach based on historical trends and the notion of “What can we afford?”

The process that is proposed is to work prayerfully through the questions:

- What is our vision?
- What is our Mission?
- What resources do we need?
- What will our mission cost?
- How will we pay for our mission?

- He explained the challenge of ministerial review which involved both ministers & many others who interact with them. He mentioned two aspects of the review: looking from the ministers’ perspective & from the congregation’s perspective. He noticed openness, honesty & learning, & feeling blessed with the team, leadership & discovery aspects. Due to the ministers’ roles & division of duties between 9:15, 11am & Belair communities he urged our understanding & patience when wanting to talk with the ministers.
- He recognized the contribution of other staff members; Jacky Otworowski (Office), Janet Maschmedt (Community Program) & Rohan Christogu (Cleaner).
- He thanked people for their ideas & contribution to fundraisers & other events.
- He said that through the AGM, Steering group & comments the BUC Communications group have formed & begun work, including their informative noticeboard. He thanked them for their energy in beginning this group.
- There were no questions on his report.

### 3) Finance report:

- Brian Pickering (for Ray Bown) reported that 2008 ended better than expected because expenditure was reduced & projects were deferred. In 2009 offerings are slightly ahead & the garage sale had a good result. Therefore some capital works can be achieved this year. The finance committee has concerns about 2010.
- He thanked Bob Potter for his role & responsibilities, including payroll, GST & budgets for the last 15 years.
- He referred to the church’s three accounts (Main account, Property & Community Program) with tabled statements.
- He talked about Peter Burgess’ inclusion & gaining of knowledge on the finance committee.
- There were no questions on his report.

#### 4) Tabled Reports:

- There were no responses to these reports.

#### 5. Other Business

- 1) Ewan Hazeldine & Alastair Blake discussed the following presentation on Mission Planning & Budget. Ewan explained the initial process:

## The journey so far .....

- Council Planning Retreat – Feb 2008
  - Explored our journey as a “pilgrim people”
  - Where is God leading us?
- Council appointed Steering Group
  - To help BUC discern who we are?
  - What are our community values and beliefs?
  - What is God calling us to do in this time and place?
- AGM – Nov 2008
  - report of Steering Group & positive feedback
  - Council asked to prepare balanced 2010 budget

## The journey goes on .....

- Council set up budget & planning task groups
- Council Retreat – Feb 2009 (22 attendees)
  - Ian Price : “Growing Generous Givers”
  - Rob Stoner : What is God calling us to be and do?
- Congregation Planning Day – March 2009 ( 60)
  - all congregation invited
  - Rob Stoner : as above
  - mission-based budgeting framework reported
  - specific mission emphases identified
- Now seek to engage whole congregation
  - guidance in preparing budget

## Firstly, what is our vision?

- *Planning Days asked the question "What is God calling us to be and become?"*
- *Many ideas – need more time and work*
- *In the meanwhile, our current Vision statement serves us well*
- *"BUC is called by God to be an inclusive Christian community committed to justice, learning, service and care."*

- Alastair discussed mission-based budget as time to think differently & to dream about the future, while considering collectively what we are being called to be & do.... He said that Synod (especially Rob Stoner & Ian Price) has been encouraging but it is up to us to decide how to do it. It has been a careful, thoughtful process with many challenges. It will be a combination of old & new ideas.

## A Mission Based Budget

The idea :

- ❖ Align budget process with our calling
- ❖ Encourage collective and individual ownership

## The Budget Process

- What is our vision?
- What is our mission?
- What resources are needed?
- What is the cost?
- How will we pay?

## The Mission Budget

Our Mission	Resources Required	Cost \$	Sources of Funding
In the Congregation - Worship - Faith building - Etc			
Local Outreach			
Wider Outreach			

- Questions to Alastair: Alan Ninnes asked about adding a column between the first & second columns for strategies to apply to achieve outcomes. Alastair explained that there would be much fuller descriptions on other pages; that this reporting sheet was kept as simple as possible.
- Ros Bardsley said that you need strategies before you can decide on resources. Ewan used this comment as a transition to the next segment:

## So, what are we doing today?

- A first step before Council can prepare a budget - **defining our mission**
- What specific initiatives/projects are we called to undertake?
- What resources do we need?
- How will we fund them?
- Who will do the work?

## Firstly, what is our vision?

- *Planning Days asked the question "What is God calling us to be and become?"*
- *Many ideas – need more time and work*
- *In the meanwhile, our current Vision statement serves us well*
- *"BUC is called by God to be an inclusive Christian community committed to justice, learning, service and care."*

# What is our mission?

In the context of reaffirming and building on our current programs, the Congregation Planning Day identified the following specific mission emphases which we felt called to explore :

- Inspiring worship
- Welcoming atmosphere
- Raising our profile
- Discipleship
- Open church buildings
- Community need

# Process for today

Choose one of the specific mission emphases &

- Join a table group
- Appoint a reporter
- Consider the proposed mission-based approach
- Brainstorm specific initiatives or projects
- Spell out the detail of each and record on sheet
- Include names of those prepared to be involved
- Reporter gives brief summary to meeting

## Table Groups

1. Inspiring worship
2. Welcoming atmosphere
3. Raising our profile
4. Discipleship
5. Open church buildings
6. Community need

- Divided into 6 table groups to work on one topic per group.
- Reported back with summary sheet to whole group. (Summary sheets given to Steering group to collate before passing on to Council.)

2) Ewan Hazeldine proposed the following:

## Council recommends

That this meeting of the Congregation :

- endorse the adoption of a mission-based approach in formulation of the 2010 draft Budget; and
- acknowledge the work done by the Steering Group, the Budget Task Group and many leaders and members of BUC in the process so far.

Unanimous consensus to both proposals.

## Following on .....

- Council considers all table group reports
- Summary circulated to congregation
- Congregation confirms mission priorities
- Council drafts budget
- Special meeting of congregation considers budget at July special meeting

3) Election of Synod representatives.

- Christa Megaw & Tim Lee have been representatives for the last 12 months with Wendy Norris as the proxy. They would like to continue. (Passed by unanimous consensus.)
- Anne Grear nominated as proxy. Passed by unanimous consensus.

4) Wendy Norris thanked people for their preparation & input into this meeting & reminded people of the Global Finances forum on Thursday night (21.5.09).

6. Benediction was given by Leanne Jenki.

Meeting closed at 1:10pm.

Next meeting on 26th July 2009.

## REPORTS

### Ministers reports: Nov 2009

We would like to invite you to ***ask us a question*** that we can respond to in our 3 mins Minister's report on the day of the congregational meeting. If you would like to ask an anonymous question then please send it to the office before the meeting. Or you can contact us directly and we will then respond on the day. It doesn't even have to be a question arising from the report. If we get too many questions though we might have to choose which ones we respond too but we'll do our best. Rev Ian and Rev Leanne

### Minister's Report from Rev Leanne Jenki

Since I last wrote my last report things seem to have been very busy. The winter months this year didn't seem as quiet as past years. Apart from the usual congregational tasks ( such as: pastoral care, worship & preaching, teaching, weddings, baptisms, funerals and of course meetings, meetings, meetings) there were a few extra 'big' events in June and July. Dianne Butler Bass (visiting USA Scholar) led a four day conference on how progressive mainline churches are growing and why. I found the series to be very informative and I am very pleased that the Council and Elders are now studying one of her books. Another big event was the Celebration Service at Clayton-Wesley for the changing of the same-sex legislation. The service was attended by over 100 people. For BUC I facilitated the Living the Questions study for 12 weeks and continued with my own Masters Study program. (Although the second half of this year I have only been to 3 half day events and chose not to do a 2<sup>nd</sup> semester topic.) I resigned from the Uniting Care Commission as I felt it was an ineffectual use of my time and this allowed me to put more time into the Synod's Unity and Friends of Unity group as the co-chair of the organising group. I was also privileged to be asked to run a 6 week course for Uniting Care Wesley Adelaide with same-gender attracted people who wanted to explore their faith and Christianity. At the end of the series the group of 15 women wanted to continue to meet and "do church stuff" ...so Susan and I meet with them now on a fortnightly basis to lead worship and bible studies. The group is developing a life of its own and I have met some incredible women with very deep faiths but who all tell the painful story of being rejected by the church.

The most significant thing **WE ALL** have achieved this year is the Mission Based Budget. 'Apparently' we are the only Uniting Church in South Australia to have achieved this. I am really excited by the 5 new initiatives and think that as a church we have been doing...and will continue to do....amazing things. One of the things I learnt from the Dianna Butler Bass series is that churches will grow if they are intentionally reach out to the local community and I think we are being more and more intentional as each year passes. That is not to say that Blackwood has not done this in the past but I think we are changing the way we think about God's mission and how we participate in God's mission. So well done everyone. I feel proud to be part of the mission that happens because of Blackwood Uniting. I look forward to many more years of ministering with you to our local community.

## **Minister's Report – Ian Hunter**

The second year at Blackwood has gone very quickly. The majority of my time and energy has gone in a number of directions. They were, the visioning process, that engaged all of us during the past year, beginning to explore ways that we as a congregation might support our YAG leaders and the youth themselves better, worship, pastoral care and wider church activities. The national Assembly meetings were certainly a highlight and a learning experience for me. It was an honour to be there on behalf of the congregations of the Synod of SA. For the past month and a half I have been working with Phil Rodda in getting the Friday Night Meal Gatherings going. I believe this outreach to the homeless and needy of our community will be an important outreach of God's love.

We have had many changes as a congregation during the last two years. As we become more and more a culture of stewardship and ministry to the wider community the kingdom of God will continue to come closer. May we all be centered in prayer and our relationship with God and have the courage to follow where the way of Christ leads us.

Shalom, Ian.

## **Church Council - Report to the AGM of the Congregation**

I am pleased to report to the Congregation on the work of the Council over the past year.

The following people served on Council during the year : Sarah Agnew, David Agnew, Alastair Blake, Peter Burgess, Ray Bown, Graham Brown, Bev Eccleston, Ewan Hazeldine (Chair), Rev Ian Hunter, Rev Leanne Jenksi, Marlene Lehmann (Minute Secretary), Phil Rodda (Secretary from August), Mary Thomas and Jan Walsh (Secretary until August).

A major focus for Council has been the decision of the 2008 AGM asking Council to prepare a balanced budget for 2010. Initially Council, Elders and the Steering Group went on retreat in February, seeking to discern afresh what God is calling us to be and do in this time and place. Leadership was provided by Rev Ian Price and Rev Rob Stoner from the Synod's Mission Resourcing Network. The Congregation then participated in a similar process in March, again lead by Rob, as a result of which, a list of missional priorities were developed. The May meeting of the Congregation endorsed a mission-based approach for future budget preparation. A short-list of new initiatives were developed by Council and endorsed by a Special Meeting of the Congregation in July. The meeting also accepted a draft expenditure budget for 2010 and endorsed the development of a culture of stewardship to ensure our mission is adequately resourced. The AGM will be asked to approve a mission budget resulting from this approach. Council acknowledges the invaluable assistance provided by the Steering Group and the Mission Budget Committee throughout this process.

Earlier in the year Council undertook a ministerial review, in close consultation with Rev Leanne and Rev Ian, aimed at providing feedback on the development of their ministries and the effectiveness of those ministries in the development of our faith community. The outcome affirmed that we are blessed with our ministerial team and the leadership they are giving us on our journey as a faith community, seeking to engage in mission in obedience to God's calling. They bring different gifts which are complementary, but share a common theological perspective and view of mission. A summary of the roles and division of work of the Ministers was made available for the information of the Congregation at the May meeting. Formal feedback regarding their ministries can be made through the Chair of Council.

Other matters addressed by Council include

- Promotion of community-building activities to be run by various groups, commencing with the Progressive Dinner and the Fashion Parade.
- Establishing a communications task group to improve internal and external exchange of information about BUC activities and programs.
- Launching of the first Helen Lee Scholarship, acknowledging John Lee's further gift to the Trust Fund. Contributions to the Fund were also invited.

Council and Elders have been studying the book "Christianity for the Rest Of Us" by Diana Butler-Bass as we continue to explore God's calling to mission and ministry.

Council farewelled Sarah Agnew and Jan Walsh during the year and welcomed Phil Rodda to the role of Secretary. Bec Ecclestone, Mary Thomas, Peter Burgess and Graham Brown are not continuing. We thank them all for their many and varied contributions to the life and work of Council and will be looking forward to new members taking up the opportunity of leadership in these challenging and exciting times.

Ewan Hazeldine

## **Finance and Stewardship Ministry**

The Finance and Stewardship Committee comprises five members:

- Peter Burgess (Church Council Treasurer)
- Brian Pickering (Community Program Treasurer & Property Committee Treasurer)
- Richard Blackwell (Stewardship Recorder)
- Mark Gill (Coordinator, Stewardship Program)
- Ray Bown (Chairperson)

Key tasks of the Committee include supporting the treasurers in their roles and preparing the church budget. Preparation of the mission budget has been the major task for 2009.

This year has seen several changes in membership of the Committee. Bob Potter retired as Treasurer of the Community Program Committee and of the Property Committee at the end of last year, and John Birkinshaw accepted the roles. We were sad to learn that John took ill and passed away a few months later. We were grateful that Bob was prepared to step into the breach immediately, and we were very pleased when Brian Pickering, already a long serving member of the Committee, offered to take on the roles.

Thanks go to these and other members of the Committee, and in particular Peter Burgess, who after five years or so, will be retiring from his role of Treasurer of the Church Council at the end of this year. Peter's contribution to the smooth running of the church will be sorely missed.

I also thank Michael Hughes who has audited the Community Program accounts for 2008 (copy attached). We are currently waiting for paid auditors (for the first time in my memory, we are having to pay for auditing services) to complete their audit of the 2008 Main Account and the Property Committee accounts.

Looking forward, there is considerable more work required of the committee on the mission budget, and in particular, we need to develop practical approaches to reporting actual resource use against our new budget during 2010.

Ray Bown

Chairperson, Finance and Stewardship Committee 31<sup>st</sup> October 2009.

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT  
TO THE COMMITTEE OF BLACKWOOD UCA COMMUNITY PROGRAM**

**Report on the Financial Report**

We have audited the accompanying financial report of Blackwood Uniting Church Community Program (the association) which comprises the income statement and the balance sheet as at 31st December 2008.

**Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report**

The committee of the association is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report, which also includes establishing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

**Auditors' Responsibility**

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. We conduct our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditors' judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditors consider internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the committee, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

**Independence**

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements.

**Auditors' Opinion**

In our opinion, the financial report of the Blackwood Uniting Church Community Program presents fairly, in all material respects the financial position of Blackwood Uniting Church Community Program as at 31st December 2008 and of its financial performance for the year.

Name:

  
Michael K. Higgins

Dated this 20th day May of 2008

## **Blackwood Uniting Church - Proposed 2010 Budget**

At the AGM last year, I pointed out that, as a consequence of increasing costs and little or no growth in income, we expected a deficit of almost \$10,000 in 2009, and a further deficit of more than \$20,000 in 2010. It also seemed possible that our cash reserves in 2010 would have become so depleted that we wouldn't have the working capital to pay our bills on time.

Fortunately, our income in 2009 has improved, largely due to an increase in offerings (an extra \$4,000 is estimated this year), a better than expected Garage Sale profit (by \$1,700), improved hire of facilities income (by \$2,100), and the donation of the former Tennis Club bank balance to the church (\$4,900). In addition, it is likely that our expenditures are likely to be less than budgeted, largely due to reduced office wages (by \$5,800) following the Coordinators' request to volunteer half of her time, and reduced ministers' costs (by \$4,100) due to lower than budgeted costs of maintaining the manse.

As a consequence, we are expecting a surplus of around \$9,000 in 2009. This will provide us with an improved bank balance and therefore a sounder base upon which to tackle the financial challenges of 2010. Refer to the attached table "Blackwood Uniting Church - Budget Report 2009".

### **Mission Budget for 2010**

Council decided to change the way in which the annual budget of the church is formulated, to better reflect our mission. This approach was endorsed by the May 2009 Congregational meeting, and reaffirmed at the special meeting of the congregation in July of this year. The July meeting also endorsed a draft expenditure budget for 2010.

The purpose of the mission budget is to identify the resources required to carry out each significant component of the church's mission. The "OUR MISSION" column of the table sets out our mission goals as agreed by the congregation during 2009. The "COST" column indicates the estimated total expenditures that are expected to be incurred on account of each of the goals during 2010. Whilst the amounts shown against individual mission goals are based on (amongst other things) estimates of employees' time spent on them and to that extent may be considered notional, the total costs represent expected real cash outlays. In other words, we expect that the church's bank accounts will make payments of \$256,000 to external parties next year. There will be some additional payments (eg subsidy payments) between the church accounts, but these are not included in the Mission Budget because they are internal.

The "RESOURCES REQUIRED" column shows the type and estimated quantity of the resources needed. It shows the more significant components only: eg ministers time adds to 1.5 FTE (ie Full-Time Equivalent), but office coordinator time totals 10 of the 15 hours, as the remaining 5 hours is spread thinly over many of the mission goals.

The attached 2010 Proposed Mission Budget is the same as that presented as a draft in July, but with:

- refinements in the numbers to reflect new information that has come to light in the intervening period, including some improvements in estimating resource usage (however, no further work has been done yet to quantify the extent of volunteer time invested);
- Projected income for 2010 is added as a bottom section of the budget table.

Comparisons with 2009.

The budget document does not show comparable 2009 figures, because we did not develop a mission budget for that year. Compared to estimated 2009 results, income will be reducing in 2010 by about \$19,000. The reduction is largely due to the holding of the biennial garage sale in 2009 (approx \$11,000), and the one-off transfer in 2009 of the defunct Tennis Club bank account to the church account (approx \$5,000). The 2010 offering shown, \$152,000, represents the current level of giving. Whilst we estimate that offerings are likely to reach about \$154,000 in 2009, a small component of that represents the extra (one time only) giving that Leanne encouraged us to do following the round of grants to individuals made by the Federal Government.

Mission budget expenditures for 2010 total \$256,000, some \$12,000 greater than the equivalent expenditure estimated for 2009. \$7,200 of this is due to the new initiatives included in the budget:- culture of welcoming (\$500), hosting CYHS group (\$200), Playgroup (\$200), new signage (\$5,500), and free meals gatherings (\$800). The remainder is due to increases in costs (including a 3% increase in stipends expected in 2010).

Behind the mission budget there is a further level of detail which the Finance and Stewardship Committee and Church Council will use to manage our finances. These details include allocations to the various committees of Council, which for 2010 are similar to those of 2009, with the exception of the Property Committee.

Property Committee

In 2009 the Property Committee is not being provided with a subsidy from Council, as it has been able to manage using income from this year's successful garage sale and the hire of church facilities. For 2010, when there is no garage sale, the budget provides the Committee with an allocation of \$17,500 to enable it to continue to maintain our church facilities (\$12,000) as well as install new signage (\$5,500).

Where does the Property Committee's activity show in the mission budget? As the Committee's activity supports most of our mission goals, its resource use is apportioned in line with the facilities used to support the goals. An example of this approach is how it applies to the Community Program, discussed below.

## Community Program

The Community Program is the major user of the church facilities. On the basis of a recent review of facilities usage, including room bookings, the Program represents some 60% of all users (including worship services). Therefore, about 60% of the annual costs of operating the facilities (\$25,000) is included in the cost of delivering the Community Program mission goal. (Note that the Program is only asked to make contributions of \$8,000 towards this cost - the same level as 2009).

## Paying for our mission

The mission budget paper shows total funds available for our mission as \$233,900, \$22,100 short of what we need. How can we increase our income to balance our budget?

The two largest components of our income are offerings (\$152,000) and Community Program fees (\$50,000). I believe that there is scope to increase income in both areas. Community Program course fees have remained unchanged for some time, and have not kept pace with either the increase in costs of employing tutors, or other costs incurred by the Program. As a consequence, the Program is currently running a deficit, and this is likely to continue in 2010. The Community Program Committee is being asked to address this matter as a priority.

## Culture of Generosity / Abundance

In relation to offerings, the special meeting of the congregation in July this year agreed that we would focus on fostering a "culture of stewardship" rather than simply run another stewardship program.

Council has set up a task group to address how we can foster a culture of stewardship in the congregation. That group has met several times, and has redefined its goal as facilitating a culture of generosity or abundance. If our congregation members are more able to see God's goodness and abundance in their lives, they are more likely to be prepared to share that abundance, and be more generous givers. Expect to hear more on this topic as we move into the new year.

The \$233,900 shown in the mission budget table is based on current levels; I believe that we can do much better than that, and that there is a good prospect of eliminating our deficit by year-end.

This proposed budget has been endorsed by the church council. Please see me if you would like a copy of the 2010 budget in the old-format (ie line budget).

**Recommendation: that the AGM approves the proposed 2010 mission budget.**

Ray Bown

Chair, Finance and Stewardship Committee

1st November, 2009.

## **Report of Elders and Lay Preachers**

### 1. Urban Mission Network-Youth Study

Earlier in the year three churches in the Urban Mission Network (Blackwood, Brougham Place and Trinity) applied to Synod for funding for a half time youth worker. The application was not successful because the Synod had decided not to award any grants from the Uniting Foundation in 2009 due to the decline in its income as a result of the global financial crisis.

A sub-committee comprising Ian Penny, Anne Grear, Ken Bardsley and Bec Agnew has been established to ascertain the needs of youth in the Blackwood area, what the youth are currently doing and what facilities are available and to determine whether there is anything Blackwood Uniting Church can offer to fill any gaps.

### 2. Life and Faith at the Roundabout Forums

Two highly successful forums have been held during 2009:

(a) Associate Professor Barry Burgan on "The Global Financial Crisis"

(b) Professor Dean Jaensch on "What is Wrong with Politics in Australia, including Water"

Regrettably a third planned forum with Rec Dr Andrew Dutney and Matthew Abraham and David Bevan from radio station 891 had to be cancelled, when the latter two declined the invitation to take part.

### 3. Mission Based Budgeting

Because a number of Elders are no longer members of the Church Council the Chair of the Council invited the Elders and Lay preachers to discuss the proposal for the implementation of a Mission Based Budget for 2010. The proposal was enthusiastically endorsed by the Elders and Lay Preachers.

### 4. Diana Butler Bass Book "Christianity for the Rest of Us"

Together with Church Council Elders and Lay Preachers have been embarked on a systematic study of Diana Butler Bass' Book "Christianity for the Rest of Us" led by Rev Leanne Jenksi.

### 5. Anzac Vigil

Blackwood Uniting Church again supported the annual Anzac Vigil by making our facilities available to the youth organisations participating in the Vigil. This continues to be an important involvement of our church in the local community.

### 6. Getting to Know You Lunches

Lunches to which newcomers to our church are invited to get to know some of us and each other have continued and were held in May and October. The following people have attended during 2009 – Gwen Gilson, Merri and John Stoddart, Trish Walker, Carolyn Daniels and Stephen, Julie Bailey, Phil Rodda, Paul Matthias and Lily, Judy Adami, Liz Collins, Paul Foord, Ruth and Lindsay Sawley. We welcome these individuals to, or back to, our congregations.

### 7. Completion of Terms of Office.

Both Mary Thomas and Bev Eccleston have indicated that they will not be seeking re-election as elders when their current terms of office expire in November. We acknowledge with thanks their spiritual gifts which have been of significant benefit in their long years of devoted service to the ministry of elders.

### 8. Friday Night Meals Proposal

One of the mission activities adopted by the congregation is the building of relationships with our local community through the provision of free meals on Friday nights, initially to those who are making use of our food bank and services from Beacon. It is proposed that a pool of 40 hosts to serve the meals and eat with the guests (4 each Friday, so that each group is involved one week in 10) be established and, as a way of giving everyone in the church some ownership and participation in the ministry, that each of 10 clusters be invited to provide food for one Friday every ten weeks. Training for the individuals who will act as hosts is scheduled before the program commences,

A proposal for this activity to commence in November has been supported by Elders and Lay Preachers.

#### 9. Pastoral Care 9.15am Congregation

The following proposal for new pastoral care arrangements for the 9.15 congregation has been adopted by the Elders and Lay Preachers:

- Ministers and Elders are responsible together for pastoral care. Ministers do not have the time to do all of the pastoral care visitation
- Ministers, Pastoral Care Coordinators and the Leader of the appropriate Cluster groups to be informed of pastoral concerns
- Cluster Groups to continue to be responsible for pastoral care for members of the group
- For members of the congregation not involved in a cluster group the appropriate body for pastoral care follow up to be a Pastoral Care Group comprising the 9.15 elders who are not members of Council and members of the current Pastoral Care Group.
- The Pastoral Care Group, including one of the ministers, to meet regularly, at least bi-monthly. A Coordinator for this group will be appointed
- Each person involved in pastoral care will be allocated members not involved in cluster groups for whom they will be responsible for ensuring that any pastoral care concerns/needs are met
- Pastoral Care coordinators. Leaders of Cluster Groups to be listed under Pastoral Care in the Church Directory
- These new arrangements will be brought to the attention of the congregation through the newsletter.
- The Elders and lay Preachers will resume the past practice of having a regular item on pastoral concerns at meetings

#### 10. Bible Study

Rev Dr Anna Grant-Henderson led a well attended four week study on the Minor Prophets commencing in September.

David Agnew Convenor

## **Property Ministry**

### **Membership:**

In alphabetical order: Graham Brown, Danny Goldsmith, Russell Gear, Lisa Haddrick, Penny Harper, David Hawkins, John Hewitt, Bob Lyon, Geoff McLean, Tony Otworowski, Jane Palmer, Ray Pentland, Brian Pickering, Jean Potter, Bob Potter and Keith Rodda.

### **Current goals:**

To maintain the church and manse buildings, property and equipment in good order and make improvements so that facilities are suitable for use in presenting the Church mission and worship activities and for others using these facilities.

To utilize energy savings, rain water and solar power in the church buildings where feasible.

### **Achievements:**

**Upgrading of women's toilet** – Thanks to Mary Thomas and her fundraising colleagues who have already raised \$2,000 and promised another by 2010, and a generous donor who wants to remain nameless, we had enough to have the women's toilets upgraded. This started out as replacing the cisterns with dual flush types but expanded to include new pedestals, repairs to the plumbing and wall tiling.

**Internet access for manse-** In order to allow direct access to the internet a system connected to the church internet has been provided.

### **Routine things**

Things such as replacing the answering machine, replacing doors and handles to the coffee lounge, cleaning the shed and store room, cleaning leaves from gutters, changing light bulbs and tubes, repairing chairs and tables, repairing carpets and providing protective strips, replacing hessian on the mobile screens, and the sorting and storage of Blackwood Church archives continue.

**Ministry officers** People holding office are proposed as:

Tony Otworowski: Chairperson

Bob Lyon: Secretary

Brian Pickering: Treasurer

Graham Brown **Convenor.**

## **Mitcham Hills Inter-church Council Inc.**

### **23 Years of Service in Junior Primary Schools**

We wish to acknowledge the work of Mrs. Bev. Eccleston who for the past 23 years has been presenting the Christian message of Easter and Christmas to Junior Primary children in the seven Junior Primary Schools of this area.

Christian Pastoral Support Workers (Chaplains) in these schools give high praise for the professional, meaningful and entertaining methods used by Bev, and her helper Mrs Alison Moore.

The Council recognises that these presentations require much thought and preparation in the months before hand.

This is a valuable outreach to the many children who may not otherwise have access to the true message of Christmas and Easter.

Grateful thanks from Blackwood Uniting and the MHICC, Bev.

## **BEACON, Local Churches working together to help local people**

Beacon recognises the support of our sponsors, Curves and Flight Centre Blackwood. Curves through its membership has provided much of the food items distributed and Flight Centre donate 1% of flight costs (excluding taxes) travel insurance, and any tours booked through them to this program.

Three new volunteers have been inducted over the past few weeks. Please refer to our service any in this community who are facing difficult times.

The emergency relief office at the Church of Christ is open on Wednesday 10.00am to 2.00pm

## Report to the Congregation from the Community Programme

This year as ever has been a busy and vibrant one for the participants, tutors, volunteers and staff of the Community Programme. The year started on a sombre note, with the unexpected death of one of our well loved tutors, Barbara Skinner. After some very hot weather, and subsequent low attendances, activity and spirits rose.

The Programme funded the supply and installation of air-conditioning in the Coffee Lounge, and we expect to get full use from this in the summer of 2010. This will ensure that we have a cool place for some of our more vulnerable participants who may otherwise stay home and miss their time of fellowship.

Three new classes have been added this year; Felting, Beaded Jewellery and Pilates. Some of our other classes have struggled a little for numbers, in part due to illnesses, people away on holidays and also the economic downturn. The Management Committee are always looking at ways we can increase our participation and offer vibrant and responsive programming. The most effective form of advertising we have is word of mouth and we encourage the congregation to mention the Community Programme to family and friends. There has been a small increase in the number of younger women participating and it is great to see those forming bonds with other young mums and people within their classes.

Changes to our traditional "Display Days" this year include a new name - **Create-about**, and a refocussing on the aims of the Programme. The Management Committee decided to limit selling stalls to participants from the Programme, from within the BUC community and to charity groups. Time will tell how this will go. There does seem to be a renewed interest from some classes in promoting their activity.

As part of Create-about, our Men's Shed from Belair hope to have a mini Shed operating over the two days, and to have bikes for sale. The blokes meet every Wednesday morning, rain, hail or shine, and refurbish bikes and other wheeled objects, in an atmosphere of camaraderie and support. This is such an important opportunity for blokes to meet with other blokes in a natural and productive activity.

The Community Programme Management Committee is a subcommittee of the Church Council and has recently looked at their Role Statement and revised it. This will be submitted to Church Council for approval.

What happens at the programme here each week often has less to do with WHAT happens, but much more to do with WHO. So many participants say this is such an important connection to other people; that they miss it when they are on holidays and that their friendship and support networks are based around their classes. We are extremely grateful to the volunteers who give of their time each week to ensure this interaction can occur. If we were to pay them what the Government values their time at ( \$ 25 per hour), the Programme, indeed the Church would be bankrupt within weeks!!

In conclusion, it is a privilege to work in an arena of such joy, where life's ups and downs are experienced every week, but where there is always support, friendship and growth. This truly is an outreach of this Church community. **Janet Maschmedt**

## **BLACKWOOD UNITING CHURCH LIBRARY REPORT OCTOBER 2009**

“Books are quiet. They do not dissolve into wavy lines or snowstorm effects. They do not pause to deliver commercials. They are three dimensional having length, breadth and depth. They are convenient to handle and completely portable”. Anon.

Although books make up the majority of the library’s holdings, we also have DVDs, videos, audiotapes and CDs. This year we have added 50 books, 45 of which have been donated, 3 donated DVDs and 2 donated CDs.

In “Maralinga – the Anangu story Christobel Mattingley with the Yalata and the Oak Valley Community members describe in words and vivid pictures what happened in the Maralinga Tjarutja lands before and after the bombs. The combination of the Anangu artwork and the stories told in their own words are a powerful portrayal of these events.

In her book “Defense of doubt” Val Webb encourages the reader to question rather than ignore their doubts. Marcus Borg in his book “Jesus” seeks to uncover the life, teachings and relevance of a religious revolutionary using historical scholarship to picture Jesus in a first century context and then exploring His relevance to the twenty first century.

For many years we have been receiving Kuca News, which has wonderful ideas for children’s worship, craft and resources. Unfortunately this will cease from the coming issue.

Thanks are due to Karen Collins who has developed the library section of the church’s webpage. The library section “Check it out” contains a description of the library, and information on how to borrow. The latest editions of the booklets “Books for bibliotherapy” and “Worship materials in the library” are available for downloading. A new book review is added every month.

Joy Belling

## Mission and Justice Report

“As we struggle with the seduction of wealth and the disastrous effects of our greed on the plight of millions of people in the world, the gospel does not tell us not to worry and to ignore the issue. It promises that when we face the issue fairly and openly, God is there with us and we need not be crushed by the overwhelming nature of the problem. We are not being asked to save the world or solve world poverty all on our own, but we are being asked to take it seriously – because, as Jesus keeps reminding us: people matter. What we say and do needs to be good news for the poor in our world if we truly mean to follow Jesus.

Mark 10 serves us well for sorting out our priorities – in leadership, in congregation and faith communities, in families, and in our world. In each area there is a clear thread binding the themes together: God cares about all people; no one is worthless; greatness is about love, not about might, success, and wealth in the world terms. To follow Jesus is to walk the path of compassion – even when sometimes it is unpopular or even downright dangerous. The cross becomes its symbol, turning popular notions of greatness (and of God) upside down.”

This extract from William Loader’s book *The New Testament with Imagination* is an excellent explanation of why so many people support the Mission and Justice projects of our church. This year our program has had the theme of Journeying with the people we seek to serve and we have focused on four major areas.

**Journeying with the Kurna people:** This is a slow journey as we establish a relationship of trust with the people. Ewan Hazeldine and a small group maintain our links with the Living Kurna Cultural Centre at Marion. It’s a great place for a picnic. Visit their shop to buy gifts. The Uniting Church made an historic decision at its recent Assembly to recognise in the preamble to the church’s constitution that God has always been present with Aboriginal people.

**Journeying with the Church in Papua:** Peter Stephens and a small group from our church will visit Papua in February 2010 to attend the celebration of the arrival of the Gospel in Papua as guests of the GKI (church) there. The proceeds from mission socks coordinated by Peter Burgess provide support to the Papuan church. Please support the cake stall at the Community Program display days which will help bring Papuan students for English language experience.

**Journeying with Kids:** Our involvement in the Kids Hope programme at Blackwood Primary School continues. A team of mentors visit a child for one hour each week. More mentors are needed for this rewarding program. Please speak to Leanne if you would like to be involved.

**Journeying into the sacredness of all creation:** The green circle in the hall has been our reminder to be alert for ways of caring for the environment. Our contact person is Anne Magarey.

**Other journeys:** We have many other Mission and Justice projects. Thanks to all who regularly contribute food for the needy; Mary Thomas’ sales of dried fruit support rural producers and the work of Frontier Services; sales of Fair Trade tea and coffee help producers in developing countries; our support of the Christmas Bowl Appeal is coordinated by Malcolm McArthur. Christmas cards to support Uniting World, Frontier Services and TEAR fund will be available for sale from the office soon.

A lot of other things happen here at Blackwood and you can keep informed by checking the Mission and Justice notice board in the church foyer. We invite you all to pray for people everywhere who are poor, homeless, stateless, members of minorities suffering discrimination, terrified by war, exploited by the powerful, or struggling as a result of drought or misfortune.

Enid Ninnes, Christa Megaw, Alastair Blake

## **Urban Mission Report**

We have had 4 gatherings at different churches throughout the group. It is always great to share the resources others use and learn from the education sessions.

Our next meeting is on Nov. 26<sup>th</sup> and I will be car pooling if you want to join us.

Next year, Feb. 25<sup>th</sup> will be hosted by us here at Blackwood, so will be a perfect opportunity to come and see what we do and catch up with other members.

I encourage you to go on the website [www.urbannetwork.org.au](http://www.urbannetwork.org.au) to read the bulletins and keep intouch with the advertised upcoming activities with in the churches. You can also access the site through Blackwood Unitings website, link is under leadership.

Wendy Norris and Anne Magarey

## **11am congregation Report**

11am congregation continues to worship and care for each other through Sunday worship, Sunday lunches, Pastoral care and Friday friendship.

Average attendance at worship over the last 6 months is around 40 with higher attendances at Communion, Special days such as Palm Sunday, visiting choirs and lunch days. Money raised at the lunches is used to continue to sponsor our CCF child Ephrem in Ethiopia with any extra money given to causes that the group suggests.

Pastoral Care has been coordinated by Jan Wiseman and the model of carer groups continues to work for this 11am group

First Friday Friendship has many members from the 11am worship group, others are local folk who are looking for a monthly exchange with friends. Attendances vary between 15 to more than 25. Friends exchange their life stories, travel experiences and even insight into Shakespeare

Dried fruit sales are still providing a close link with the drought affected Riverland horticultural industry. Wholesale bulk purchase of fruit gives immediate cash to the grower whilst the profit from sales of packed fruit helps support the Frontier Services. Two special fruit sales provided money for the disaster Shelter Boxes in one instance and the other provided money to the Community Program and to the project of renovating the Ladies' rest room.

Mary Thomas

## **Notes from Synod**

Christa Megaw