



Blackwood Uniting Church is called by God to be an inclusive Christian community committed to justice, learning, service and care.

Blackwood Uniting Church



Meeting of the Congregation

Sunday November 18th 2012

Minutes and Reports

Congregational Meeting
 Sunday 18th November 2012
 Blackwood Uniting Church

Agenda

Page

1. Attendees Present/Apologies		
2. Minutes of AGM of the Congregation 20.11.2011	3
3. Matters Arising		
4. Spoken Reports		
4.1 New Mission Plan	Ray Bown	
4.2 Budget	Phil Megaw	5
4.3 Conversations with Blackwood CoC	Ray Bown	11
4.4 Nominations		
4.5 Dean's Report & Proposal	Rev Dean Eland	12
4.6 Outreach Minister's Report	Rev Coral Cogs Smith	14
4.7 Church Council Report	Ray Bown	15
5. Questions on spoken reports to be offered after each section		
6. Tabled Reports		
6.1 Property Ministry Report	Tony Otworowski	17
6.2 Friday Night Meals	Jackie Otworowski	20
6.3 Roundabout Playgroup	Marnie Agnew, Carys Penny	22
6.4 Community Program	Riki Owens-Bennett	24
6.5 Library Services	Joy Belling	27
6.6 Mission and Justice	A. Blake, H. Lee, & M. McArthur	28
6.7 Urban Mission Network	Wendy Norris	29
6.8 11am Congregation	Mary Thomas	30
6.9 Helen Lee Memorial Trust Fund	Brian Pickering	31
6.10 Kid's Hope	Ian Penny	32
6.11 Mitcham Hills InterChurch Council	Gloria McArthur	33
6.12 Young Adults Group	Heidi Ross & Rev Coral Cogs Smith	34
6.13 Website	Karen Collins	35
7. Questions on Tabled reports		
8. Next Meeting - Sunday May 19th 2013		
9. Benediction		

2. Minutes of AGM of the Congregation 20.11.2011

Held on Sunday November 20 2011 at 11am

Wendy Norris (Chairperson) welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming. She then led the meeting in prayer.

A sheet for attendees to sign was circulated during the meeting and apologies known were also recorded on the same list.

The minutes of the 2010 Annual General Meeting were read and confirmed without comments.

Wendy then explained the agenda and how the nominations would be dealt with.

Reports

Deacon Minister

Rev. Coral (Cogs) Smith presented her report and spoke particularly on "How welcoming are we?"

Minister of the Word

Rev. Leanne Jenski presented her report and informed the meeting that she would be taking Long Service Leave for 9 weeks in 2012 partly due to a wedding in her family. She advised that Rev. Christine Garner would be coming to take her place.

Church Council

Ray Bown presented his report. In future the executive will deal with minor/administrative matters in between meetings of the Council which meets two monthly. Council will continue to consider mission goals, budget and policy in the months ahead with a stewardship programme planned for September 2012. Careful consideration will also be given as to how to best use a large bequest made to our church and adds to the importance of reviewing the policy and goals.

Budget

The report was given and a challenge issued to all regarding the \$16,000 deficit.

The meeting approved the proposed 2012 mission budget.

Discussion followed led by Rev. Leanne:

The model of the church as a mosaic was discussed with all facets of the activities being diagrammatically represented. The conclusion was that the Church is more than just Sunday worship. Leanne will display the model in the foyer.

Other matters:

The new **sign** for the front of the church is finished and just waiting for transport to deliver it.

Friday Night Meals are continuing successfully with some new people now attending. Over 100 of our people are involved in some way or another in these meals. The Christmas dinner will be held on 23rd December. Donation of gifts to those coming can be left at the office.

Play group reported that there are now 45 children attending.

Adam Tretheway from Synod Department of International Mission will be with us on December 11th.

Urban Mission Network next meeting on 24th November.

Voting for various positions within the church followed.

Council - Ray Bown for 1 year: Ian Penny for 3 years: Angela Smith for 1 year.-

Synod Rep.: Tim Lee

Community Program Board of Management: Lynona Hawkins

An **Urban Mission Network** rep. is needed but no nominations were received. This needs to go in the newsletter.

Rev. Leanne pronounced the Benediction

4.2 Budget

Proposed 2013 Budget Report

Progress in 2012

In 2012 we have continued working with our mission budget - a budget built around our mission - focussing on all the activities we want to do and be involved with. This is presented in a way that enables us to see the resources required for each component of our mission. We have also monitored what we have actually achieved. As a congregation we continue to look for how we can best utilise our resources.

In 2011 the Blackwood UC congregation was very fortunate to have received a bequest totalling \$96,750 which has been invested until we as a congregation determine how to best utilise this gift. We have thought about this a little in 2012 as part of our discernment process, but we haven't yet made any decisions. Meanwhile, the interest is going towards our income.

We had a Listening and Looking Forward discernment process in the middle of 2012 where we reviewed the life of our congregation and recently we received the results of the 2011 National Church Life Survey. This has helped us consider what we want to do in the future. We are currently conducting a giving program so that we can financially support all the programs and activities we want to be involved in.

Mission Budget 2012

In financial terms, 2012 has been a year that we budgeted for a \$16,000 deficit so that we could continue our programs. Rev Leanne Jensi left us in July and we have had interim ministry work by Rev Dean Eland on part time basis and extra paid time for Rev Cogs Smith. Ministerial costs will be just under our budgeted figure. Meanwhile our offerings are down by some 5 to 6%, so our essential offering income will be down by \$9,000 below our budget target.

Community program income will be down about 8% or \$4,000. It is great to see our facilities being used so much and income from hiring out the facilities is expected to be up about 30% or \$4,000.

Miscellaneous & donations income was also up above our budget. During 2012 we received the last of the proceeds from the sale of the Parkway Manse, some \$8,700, and the property committee have been able to immediately use some of this money and bring forward some of their forward planned projects.

We learnt from our 2011 experiences to better plan our expenditure for the 2012 Mission Goals and overall, our spending in 2012 against our mission goals has been pretty close to our budget. Priorities can and do change during the year but within the 'In the Congregation' section, Worship and Pastoral Care were up a little (2-3%), Faith Building down a little (3%) and Community building up by 14%. 'In the Local Community' (ie Community Program, Local Journeying and Ecumenical Projects) had spending very close to our planning. The 'Wider Community' was also down, but only by some \$2,500.

The net effect of the income and expenses for the 2012 year is a deficit of some \$14,000, so we have used some of our savings to keep carrying out our Mission Goals.

Mission Budget for 2013

The Executive and the Council have done a lot of work recently on critically reviewing the goals for next year and trying to improve the presentation and information about those goals to show how they link with our Vision. We have changed the presentation of the goals. The purpose of the Mission Budget (see tables attached) is to identify the resources required to carry out each significant component of the church's mission. The first page of the table sets out our mission goals and how we might achieve them.

The second page links these Mission Themes and shows the type and estimated quantity of the resources needed in 2013 in the right hand columns. For comparison our projected results for 2012 (in the new format) are shown in the centre columns.

The last page shows the income side of the plan and seeks a large increase of 17% or \$26,000 in offering income so that we can achieve our Missions Goals and have a balanced budget.

Expanding our Family & Children's Ministry activities is a key component in 2013 with a new monthly Godly play activity to complement the successful Messy Church and growth in the Playgroup, and commencement of a Mainly Music program.

This proposed budget has been endorsed by the Blackwood UC Council.

Recommendation: that the Blackwood UC Congregation approves the proposed 2013 mission budget.

Phil Megaw
Chair, Finance and Stewardship Committee
11th November 2012

Finance and Stewardship Ministry

The Finance and Stewardship Committee comprised six members:

- Jan Furness (Church Council Treasurer)
- Brian Pickering (Community Program Treasurer & Property Committee Treasurer)
- Leanne Jensi (until Jul 2012)
- Mark Gill
- Ray Bown
- Phil Megaw (Chairperson)

Key tasks of the Committee include oversight of church finances, supporting the treasurers in their roles, planning future stewardship/giving programs and preparing the annual overall church budget. We have met regularly through the year. Thank you to all the members for their commitment.

In particular Jan Furness and Brian Pickering have continued their very valuable, regular and time consuming work as the treasurers in ensuring that payments are made and correctly recording all transactions.

Apart from a minister representative, we are seeking a new person to join the committee. We have a vacancy for a committee member to act as the Recorder.

Audited financial statements for the accounts of the church for the financial year ended 31 December 2011, were presented at the mid-year Congregation meeting.

Mission budget documents for 2013 are provided as a separate report.

Phil Megaw
Chairperson, Finance and Stewardship Committee
11th November 2012

Mission Plan and 2013 Budget

Vision: Blackwood Uniting Church is an inclusive Christian community committed to justice, learning, service and care.

<u>Our Mission</u>	<u>Achieving our Mission</u>	<u>Growing Edges</u>
<p><i>JUSTICE - Partnership and Solidarity</i></p> <p>In this congregation many members act out their Christian service and witness in diverse local, national and international settings, making contributions to many justice movements. Our collective mission is to encourage, support and give focus to this work, support the Urban Mission Network and the wider Uniting Church through its Mission and Service Fund.</p>	<p>We do this through a small coordinating group to keep an oversight and promote an understanding of justice work as journeying with people in need and caring for the environment. We work through the Uniting Church or a partner church. Major justice themes are highlighted in worship across the year and public forums.</p>	<p>Developing a diary of justice initiatives and building relationships with, for example, Kaurna people and the Theological College in Baguio, Philippines; highlighting justice issues and environmental awareness.</p>
<p><i>LEARNING and CELEBRATING - Worship</i></p> <p>We provide inspirational worship and welcoming fellowship for people of all ages. We are a multi-generational church meeting on Sundays at 9.15am followed by morning tea, at 11.00am, and monthly at 4.00pm for Messy Church for families with children.</p>	<p>The way we do this involves people of all ages in planning and using their gifts.</p> <p>Some assist in leading worship, many are on our roster systems and others provide music and share in a ministry of prayer.</p>	<p>In the next three years we will add a Sunday 4.00pm monthly Godly Play event to complement Messy church. We will develop a team ministry of worship and embrace community worship events.</p>
<p><i>LEARNING and the COMMUNITY - Weekday activities and events</i></p> <p>We maintain an extensive community based arts and crafts program on Wednesday and Thursday and provide hospitality for playgroups.</p>	<p>The way we do this involves leaders who plan, support and encourage others to share in this bridge building ministry.</p> <p>This service extends our pastoral links with people who we come to know as friends and co workers.</p>	<p>In the next three years we aim to expand our family ministry and consider other ways of meeting the spiritual needs of participants, including a Mainly Music program. We will review the Community Program with the intention of developing new activities.</p>
<p><i>SERVICE - Practical actions and sharing</i></p> <p>We are in partnership with other churches in providing practical and spiritual service to those in need in our wider community.</p>	<p>We do this through our membership with the Mitcham Hills Inter Church Council, by supporting Beacon, schools ministry, and Kids Hope. On Friday nights we host a fellowship meal for people doing it tough and learn about community needs.</p>	<p>In the next three years we aim to work closely with the Church of Christ to consider a number of proposals to extend and strengthen this ministry, including, for example, the possibility of a men's shed and a community garden.</p>
<p><i>CARE - Groups and fellowship</i></p> <p>We keep in touch, visit, meet for fellowship, offer pastoral care during life's significant moments and look for ways to provide helpful resources and opportunities for faith formation.</p>	<p>Cluster and discussion groups meet regularly and share concerns, study, offer pastoral support and pray for each other.</p>	<p>In the next three years we aim to extend our care by further developing pastoral skills and equip and encourage the pastoral team which shares responsibility with the ministers. We will seek ways in which we can continue to explore the possibility of God.</p>

Mission Theme	Projected Result 2012		Budget for 2013	
	Resources Being Used 2012	\$	Resources Required 2013	\$
<p>JUSTICE - Partnership and Solidarity Justice program, emphasising partner churches, Aboriginal people, Refugees and Asylum seekers, and the environment. Support for the Urban Mission Network and the Uniting Church in Australia at state and national levels.</p>	0.11 FTE ministers, lay volunteers, partner church projects, other projects, appeals, Synod Mission & Service Fund (\$13,800) and Urban Mission Network (\$1,600)	29,700	0.17 FTE ministers, lay volunteers, partner church projects, other projects, appeals, Synod Mission & Service Fund (\$13,000) and Urban Mission Network (\$1,500)	35,000
<p>LEARNING and CELEBRATING - Worship Inspirational worship of different styles. Sunday morning worship at 9:15 am and 11:00 am. Sunday afternoon worship for families – Messy Church & Godly Play on the first & third Sundays of the month.</p>	0.54 FTE ministers, admin support, extensive support of lay leaders and volunteers, 16% of operating cost of buildings.	62,200	0.61 FTE ministers, admin support, extensive support of lay leaders and volunteers, 18% of operating cost of buildings.	65,900
<p>LEARNING for the COMMUNITY - Weekday activities and events An extensive community based arts and crafts program on Wednesday and Thursday and hospitality for playgroups.</p>	Paid Coordinator (2 days per week), paid tutors, 0.29 FTE ministers, volunteers, 57% of operating cost of buildings.	100,000	Paid Coordinator (2 days per week), paid tutors, 0.28 FTE ministers, 61% of operating cost of buildings.	101,300
<p>SERVICE - Practical actions and sharing Support for the Mitcham Hills Inter-Church Council, including Beacon, schools ministry and Kids Hope. Host a fellowship meal for people doing it tough. Explore ways we can share ministry with the Blackwood Church of Christ.</p>	0.14 FTE minister, admin support, support by lay volunteers, contribution to MHICC (\$4,000), 12% of operating cost of buildings.	21,900	0.10 FTE minister, admin support, support by lay volunteers, contribution to MHICC (\$4,000), 4% of operating cost of buildings.	19,000
<p>CARE - Groups and fellowship Pastoral Care, including crisis and other visiting by ministers and lay people. Cluster groups, Bible study, and youth groups which meet for fellowship, and/or spiritual and faith formation.</p>	0.33 FTE minister, significant admin support, volunteers, 12% of operating cost of buildings.	51,000	0.34 FTE minister, significant admin support, volunteers, 12% of operating cost of buildings.	53,100
TOTALS		264,800		274,300

FTE stands for Full Time Equivalent

Income Source	Projected Result 2012		Proposed Budget 2013	
		\$		\$
Offerings	Compared to budget of \$160,000 ie down 5-6% below 2012 budget.	151,000	A \$26,000 or 17% increase. Target for giving program in late 2012 to be able to achieve all our Mission Goals and have a balanced budget.	177,000
Community Program – enrolment fees & miscellaneous income	Fees & miscellaneous income meet two thirds of the overall costs of the program.	47,000	Fees & miscellaneous income meet two thirds of the overall costs of the program.	45,000
Facilities hire & other property related income	Projection of current levels. Budget was \$11,800.	16,000	Use of facilities by many groups.	16,000
Fundraising - planned	No Garage Sale this year. Fundraising budget of \$3,200 not achieved.	1,200	Includes Garage Sale \$12,000. Significant focus needed on other fundraising as well to achieve the target.	16,000
Mission giving	Christmas Bowl, Lent Event appeal, Disaster Fund appeals, etc which flow through our accounts.	2,000	Christmas Bowl, Lent Event appeal, Disaster Fund appeals, etc which flow through our accounts.	2,000
Donations & miscellaneous	From a wide variety of sources Last proceeds from Parkway Manse sale	11,000 8,700	Variety of sources	8,000
Playgroup, Mainly Music and Godly Play	In 2012 only Playgroup fees	2,000	A growing activity.	5,000
Interest earned	Includes interest on \$96,750 bequest received in 2011.	6,600	Includes interest on \$96,750 bequest.	5,500
Total Funds available for our Mission		245,500		274,500
Net Cash Surplus / -Deficit	-Deficit	-12,000	Surplus / Deficit	0

4.3 Conversations with Blackwood Church of Christ

Church of Christ & Uniting Church in Blackwood Combined Vision Statement

Vision: As two active churches in Blackwood we will pursue conversations to discover common mission & ministry goals, and find ways in which we can work together.

Reason: we have a common call in Christ to participate in showing God's love to those in the community. We share close proximity to the Blackwood shopping hub and we already have common interests, mission frameworks and theological synergy.

We seek to:

- develop a deeper friendship
- collaborate on common activities
- find opportunities to gather and be in conversation together

A group of key leaders from each church have been meeting for the past 4 months to explore what we might have in common and how we can pursue collaborative and unifying efforts to strengthen our Christian ministry and presence in Blackwood. So far these include the following:

- Youth ministry
- Common interest groups, including Wednesday and Friday Friendship groups, 'Parents and Pipsqueaks' and playgroups, and library resources.
- Bible study/cluster groups
- More combined worship opportunities

Our combined leaders' meetings have so far resolved to pursue two things:

1. On January 6th we propose to bring together our worshipping communities. We will have common worship at 9.15am on the Main Oval at the Belair Recreation Park. This service will be led by a Church of Christ team. Those who prefer not to worship in the Park may attend a traditional service at 11.00am in the Uniting Church.
2. We propose to meet regularly in 2013 to continue to explore how our churches can bring resources together to strengthen our ministry in the community, and to identify emerging community needs and ways in which we might collaborate in addressing them.

Recommendation: that the AGM endorse these two proposals.

Ray Bown - Chairperson, BUC Council

4.5 Dean's report and proposal

Blackwood Uniting Church

November 2012

A Time of Transition

The AGM is an important opportunity to reflect back over the year and to acknowledge the work of ministry being undertaken by so many people. We are also prompted to think about the next few years as Blackwood UC finds itself in a time of transition. As supply minister at Blackwood for the last few months one of my main tasks has been to work with officers and other leaders to clarify future directions and begin to outline a framework for developing long term core ministry practices.

Over the past few months the congregational profile has been revised and this provides the basis for conversations being conducted by the Joint Nominating Committee. Members have also had the opportunity to discuss the report of the NCLS survey undertaken in 2011 and consideration has been given to the Listening and Looking Forward report prepared by Carolyn Kitto.

These reflections recognise that BUC has many gifted and long term members who have developed ministry practices that are the foundations for the future. In thinking about the future we have begun to use the terms, *growing the edges* and *pushing the boundaries*. Patterns of work and routines express the hopes and commitment of those who have been inspired by visions in the past and these are the foundation for extending the church's ministry into the future. BUC's vision statement is a headline banner and the many dimensions of ministry are pictured in the mosaic.

In this time of transition BUC has the opportunity to consolidate these directions into five core ministry practices for the next three years. This organisational framework has been approved in principle by the Church Council and we are now inviting members to think about the way they are involved in particular forms of ministry.

While a relatively small group of members have been involved in the overall planning these emerging directions will need to involve all members at their points of interest and connection. The mission budget for 2013 is also an invitation to members to support the vision. Against this background proposals for growing the edges will need to be specific, achievable and take into account the capacity to deliver.

The following dots points summarise some of the action steps that need to be taken in the next three years.

- The Church Council, meeting bi monthly, to assume responsibility for policy and ministry directions and ensure that ministry teams are supported. Meetings of the Church Council will keep the whole picture in view.

- Responsibility for programs, activities and new initiatives will be undertaken by five ministry teams and two standing committees. Membership and responsibilities of team members will be negotiated under the fivefold framework of the vision; Mission and Justice, Celebrating and Learning, Community Learning, Service and Care. The two standing committees are Finance and Property and from time to time short term task groups could be appointed with specific responsibilities.
- Teams will work on the detail and scope of responsibilities, plus insights and suggestions from the Kitto report as well as evaluation of existing programs. Teams will be encouraged to prepare recommendations about future directions to the Church Council while attending to detailed actions within the mission budget.
- Membership of teams to be made up of those already involved as well as those who are willing to learn on the job. Coral in her work as deacon to be co-leader of the Community Learning and Service teams and the Minister of the Word the other three.
- Ministers and officers will engage in one to one conversations with those currently involved in leadership and others expressing an interest and this will assist members discern their gifts for ministry and help them reflect on their involvement in the groups, activities and programs of BUC.

Dean Eland
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4.6 Outreach Minister's Report

There is an old saying about tackling big things – “*How do you eat an elephant?*”

The answer is “*Bit by bite*”. My “ministry elephant” is BUC’s focus on how do we connect with broad spectrum of people in our mosaic and even beyond into the wider community? How do we ensure that where we put our time and efforts makes a difference, that it builds social capital, caring relationships between people and helps people with the God stuff?

This year, the particular outreach focus has been on **Family Ministry**, this was been encouraged by Carolyn Kitto’s report and the response of volunteers who are passionate about family ministry. That is, working with children and their parents, grandparents or carers as a way of encouraging families to connect and create networks of caring relationships with each other and the people of the worshipping congregation. It is the sort of stuff that makes the fabric of our society better, as well as caring and nurturing people as individuals.

So **The Roundabout Family Ministry Team** was formed, it is an umbrella team of people have been set up for coordination and communication between the different programs of *Playgroups*, *Mainly Music*, *Messy Church*, *Godly Play*. These programs – with the *Community Program Crèche*, and the *Children’s Corner at 9.15 Service* mean BUC will now be offering something for families everyday of the week except Saturday. How exciting is that!

Of course, **Friday Meals** is still running and the people are starting to look forward to the Friday Before Christmas Meal, which is the high point of the year for them.

The Community Program’s famous **Roundabout Craft Fair & Exhibition** is coming up on the **Friday 23rd & Saturday 24th November 2012**. Riki & I spent time at the **Pink Ladies Day** & the **CoroAlive 175 Festival** promoting both the Craft Fair and the Community Program and BUC with leaflets and BUC bios. The Community Program’s future challenge is the ongoing task of finding teachers and classes that are relevant and people will warm to. One suggestion has been a Community Garden or a Men’s Shed. Don’t hesitate to speak to either Riki or myself with ideas; we are always looking for inspiration.

Also, next year will bring some new ways of community connecting as we develop our relationship with the **Church of Christ**, there are possibilities there that we are only beginning to explore.

So there is much to look forward to in 2013, new beginnings and new possibilities as we seek to be a place to consider the possibility of God in our lives and in the lives of the people that we met.

Thank you for your time, Cogs.

4.7 Church Council Report

During 2012, the following people served on Council: Ken Bardsley, Alastair Blake, Joy Boase, Ray Bown (Chair), Michael Bull, Liz Collins, Bruce Marriott, Phil Megaw, Tony Miller, Tony Otworowski, Carys Penny (Secretary), Ian Penny (Deputy Chair), Angela Smith, Alison Sutcliffe, and our Deacon Rev Cogs Smith, with Revs Leanne Jenski, Christine Garner, and Dean Eland sharing the Minister of the Word role. Chris Bray has more recently joined Council as 'ex-officio' assistant Secretary.

Council continued the previous year's structure, which combined both Councillors and Elders in the meetings held every second month through the year. Council Executive, comprising the Ministers, Chairperson, Secretary, Deputy Chair, Chair of Finance and Alastair Blake met during the alternate months. Whilst there has always been a significant amount of business discussed at all meetings, the focus of the full Council meetings has been on the more strategic and policy areas, with the first half of the meetings set aside for devotions and discussion on a particular topic. Executive dealt with much of the routine business, plus significant tasks that had been delegated to it by Council.

This year has seen a lot of activity by Council and others in the following areas:

1. Mission Discernment process. We engaged Carolyn Kitto to lead us in this process, culminating in her report to the May meeting of the congregation. She confirmed our current direction, and suggested several key ways for us better undertake our mission. Council has welcomed these suggestions and has incorporated them in forward plans. Council has also prepared a substantially revised mission plan, based on the elements of our vision statement, to guide us over the next few years.
2. Giving Program. Council Executive has taken the lead in managing the "Listening and Looking Forward 2013" program which culminates on the 18th November with the return of the giving responses.
3. Conversation with the Blackwood Church of Christ. This was also an outcome of the mission discernment process. Four members of Council have met four times with four leaders of the Church of Christ, and each of our meetings has been constructive and most worthwhile. Agreement has been reached on areas in which we may be able to collaborate, subject to more detailed discussion between leaders of those areas.

4. Ministerial Supply. One of Council's roles is to arrange 'supply' during significant absences of a minister. Rev Christine Garner filled this role during March and April whilst Rev Leanne Jenski was on Long Service Leave, and Rev Dean Eland is currently in this role following Rev Jenski's departure in July. Council prepared a new church profile which was endorsed by a special congregational meeting in August. Membership of the Joint Nominating Committee includes a number of Council members.

Council has overseen a variety of other matters, including launching of Messy Church, establishment of a Family Ministry Team, and a workshop on the results of the 2011 National Church Life Survey. This information will continue to assist Council in its forward planning.

This year Council welcomed our two supply ministers (Revs Garner and Dean) and has benefitted greatly from their knowledge and experience. We thank those who are retiring from Council this year (Michael Bull, and Alison Sutcliffe) and acknowledge their contributions to the life and work of Council. I will also be retiring from Council this year. Council will be looking forward to new members taking up the opportunity of leadership in the coming years.

I have appreciated the active support of Council members over my two years as Chairperson, and am particularly grateful for the efforts of Deputy Chair, Ian Penny, who has worked hard behind the scenes to make things happen.

Ray Bown
Chairperson of Council

6.1 Property Ministry Report

1. Ministry Committee

Chairman: **Tony Otworowski**

Secretary: **Bob Lyon**

Treasurer: **Brian Pickering**

Members: **Graham Brown, Danny Goldsmith, Russell Grear, Lisa Haddrick, David Hawkins, John Hewitt, Phil Marlow, Geoff McLean, Jane Palmer, Ray Pentland, Bob Potter, Jean Potter, Keith Rodda**

2. Finance

Position at 30 September 2012

- 2.1 Opening Balance 1 January 2011 - \$4,958
- 2.2 Total income - \$43,944 (includes \$9,000 subsidy from Church Council, \$18,759 from Synod sale of Manse and \$12,750 from hire of facilities)
- 2.3 Total revenue expenditure - \$23,610
- 2.4 Total Capital expenditure - \$1,455 plus approximately \$13,000 from Synod Parkway Manse Fund
- 2.5 Total Sundry & other expenditure - \$0
- 2.6 Closing Balance for period - **\$8,344**

3. Headline Achievements for Last Reporting Period

- 3.1 Library ceiling replaced and walls painted
- 3.2 Chapel walls painted
- 3.3 Repair to major termite damage to dais under reredos
- 3.4 Library and Rear Entry upgrade including additional lighting
- 3.5 Hall walls and door frames repainted
- 3.6 Hard flooring in main hall and kitchen stripped and repolished
- 3.7 Carpets cleaned all areas
- 3.8 Soft fall replaced in play area
- 3.9 Sand pit repaired and refilled

- 3.10 Tree pruning completed
- 3.11 Archiving of Church records proceeding
- 3.12 New storage cupboards installed
- 3.13 New playgroup external shed constructed & installed (thanks to David Hawkins)
- 3.14 Office laminator replaced
- 3.15 New photocopier/printer installed
- 3.16 New office computer and laser printer order placed
- 3.17 New external advertising sign and internal signage installed
- 3.18 New playgroup external garden grow bed installed
- 3.19 New playgroup external play equipment upgrade completed
- 3.20 New portable projector screen purchased
- 3.21 New portable sound system purchased
- 3.22 New portable data projector purchased
- 3.23 New double oven & cook top for kitchen installed
- 3.24 New vacuum cleaner received (thanks to Danny Goldsmith)
- 3.25 Additional kitchen crockery and dish washer tray purchased

In addition the Property Ministry has accepted responsibility delegated by the “Council of Cooperation” for the Belair, Blackwood, Eden Hills and Upper Sturt churches for the Blackwood Manse including;

- 3.26 Maintenance works completed on Minister vacation.
- 3.27 Negotiating lease agreement for 6 month period at \$395 per week

4. The date for the 2013 Garage Sale has been set for Saturday 20th April 2013.

This important fundraising activity which occurs every two years is a great opportunity for everyone to get involved and enjoy the experience of working together to achieve a common goal. Whether you donate goods, support the preparations, work on the day or just spread the word, this fun filled activity is for all the congregation and we look forward to your support once again. Watch out for the coming months notices and if you have any questions do not hesitate to contact Tony Otworowski or Bob Lyon.

5. Your Property Ministry Making a Difference in 2012 supporting and celebrating our mission

Your Property Ministry is a dedicated team of people who share their enthusiasm and commitment for our mission by using their skills and experience to maintain and improve the facilities at Blackwood Uniting Church.

Our goal is to ensure we can continue to provide a safe and flexible environment to support community activities and mission initiatives at Blackwood.

The Property Ministry is always looking for new members, so if you are able to spare some time and want to join an active friendly group supporting our mission at Blackwood, please contact myself or any member of the team.

6. Property Ministry Secretary Required for 2013

Our long serving Secretary, Bob Lyon, is looking to step down in 2013 and anyone who may be interested in taking up this role please contact Tony Otworowski or Bob Lyon.

We would like to thank Bob for his many years of commitment, dedication and hard work in keeping the Property Ministry team focused and providing direction in living out our mission.

6.2 Friday Night Meals

1. The Team

Meals Co-ordinator: Jackie Otworowski

Meals Support: Tony Otworowski

Host Co-ordinators: Judy Adami, Penny Harper, Heidi McNamara, Tony Otworowski, Jane Palmer, Avis Whitbread, Elisabeth Williams

Cook Co-ordinators: Judy Adami, Marnie Agnew, Mary Bown, Helen Brown, Bev Eccleston, Mary Thomas, Joan Hazeldine, Wendy Norris, Janet Paull

Cooks & Hosts: The network of cooks and hosts has grown to include people from Cluster Groups, Playgroup, Community Programme, Circle of Friends, other local churches, our own congregation family and friends.

Over 100 people participate in this Ministry of which at least approximately 25 people are not members of the congregation.

2. Finance

Position at 31st October 2012

- 2.1 The Ministry functions predominately on donations from the cooks and host teams
- 2.2 Free food is provided on the first Friday in the month by **Nando's** Marion (value exceeds \$150 every month)
- 2.3 Free bread and rolls are provided every week from **Bakers Delight**
- 2.4 Blackwood **Michel's Patisserie** provide free cakes, pies & pasties (value has been in the order of \$200/month) Donations are made sometimes by individuals attending the Friday night gathering
- 2.5 Donations are used to replenish food and consumables stock
- 2.6 Donation cash closing balance for period - \$500 approx.

3. Headline Achievements for Last Reporting Period

- 3.1 The total number of people we have shared hospitality with this year is **779**
- 3.2 The maximum number of people in one session has been **48**
- 3.3 The average number of attendees this year is **18**
- 3.4 Total number of children attended this year is **86**

The core group of attendees has continued to grow from mixed backgrounds in our community. They enjoy, and are very appreciative of the friendship and hospitality provided on Friday nights. The need for companionship and friendship is very evident amongst attendees and we are able to help satisfy this hunger through the Friday Night Meals Ministry.

4. Looking Forward

The Ministry continues to grow with volunteers and support extending beyond our congregation and into the wider community. This clearly demonstrates a mission people can associate with and the need that exists to share kindness and fellowship with others.

The steady increase in the number of people receiving the simple hospitality and friendship we offer has removed the early doubts of was there a need for this ministry in our local community. The stories we hear and the thanks we receive every week are our testament to the congregation's commitment to supporting this initiative through the culture of generosity and discernment process we experienced in 2009.

This call to mission strongly aligns and grows with Blackwood's vision. Through peoples continued generosity and commitment we can live the example set by Jesus to share our love and hospitality with others and make Blackwood a welcoming place for all in our community.

We are always looking for new members to join the team, so if you are able to spare some time and want to share the experience of this mission at Blackwood, please contact myself or any member of the team.

Report Completed by: Jackie Otworowski
18 November 2012

6.3 Roundabout Playgroup

As our third year moves towards its close, we will take some time to reflect on where we've come from and where we are going. We continue to be amazed at how many families in the Blackwood community and beyond we are able to connect with. Since January 2010 we have served around 350 families with well over 400 children. This year alone we have enrolled around 100 new families.

Each week we have between 20 and 35 families attending. Some come from as far afield as Seacliff, Hawthorn, Flagstaff Hill, Darlington, Happy Valley, Aldgate, Longwood, Hallett Cove, Brighton, Plympton Park, Pasadena & St Peters, as well as the local suburbs around Blackwood. We also have a valuable connection to the Child & Family Health Service through Wendy Norris, who keeps us supplied with new mums for the 12 o'clock Mums & Bubs group – thank you, Wendy.

Playgroup is for a season in the lives of families. Sometimes the season is short – 6 months before a new mum goes back into the paid workforce, others have stayed for 2-3 years, juggling work days so they can still come to playgroup on Mondays, and now we are seeing families return with their second or subsequent children. While most children come with their mothers we have a goodly number of grandparents and a sprinkling of dads who are the primary care-givers at playgroup, and a number of dads who come along when they can to get a taste of this activity that their children talk about during the week with such enthusiasm.

Over the three years we believe the ethos of the Playgroup has remained firmly rooted in our original vision: to provide a safe, good quality, child-oriented time and space, where parents and grandparents can spend time together having fun and nurturing their relationships with their children, and where BUC can do what it does best – offer hospitality and care to the families who come. Parents willingly help out with the weekly tasks – setting up and putting away, reading stories, leading the singing, making play dough – and BUC provides a wonderful team of care-givers who serve morning tea, cuddle babies, play with older children while mum attends to a younger one, talk to the adults and much more.

From time to time our leadership team and particularly Rev Cogs, Lynona & Carys, have been able to provide pastoral care and practical assistance to parents who are struggling with depression or child-management issues, to parents who are out of work, to families new to the area, to single mothers, to others with language difficulties, and even occasionally someone with a theological argument to be had! This pastoral care is able to draw on the other services the church offers – Friday night meals, the Wednesday English language group, Community Program yoga and other classes, Beacon – thus demonstrating the importance of the whole church to this program, and the importance of having a designated ministerial presence each week.

Over the three years we have been able to provide good quality activities, equipment and materials for the families who come, covering our costs through the weekly donations, support from Council and generous donations from individuals in the congregation. In the last few months

we have purchased new puzzles and a clothes line, added a slide to the play equipment, and installed a shed to house the bikes and a garden bed which the children love to help plant and water. Earlier in the year we replaced the soft fall under the play equipment, and in conjunction with the Community Program Crèche workers we regularly change, repair and replace toys, larger play items and ride-ons.

Our program of stories, songs & crafts based on a theme for each term is appreciated by the families. We are going to work on a three-year cycle, so next year we will be able to start re-using the themes and programs from Year 1. The program has settled into a good routine which means volunteers can go away from time to time and the system still works! While the program is essentially secular in content, it is accepted by the families that we will always celebrate Easter and Christmas as Christian festivals, as well as marking Pancake Day, Mother's Day and Father's Day and either NAIDOC Week or Reconciliation Week in some way. This last term we have used the theme Australian Animals, and this will be incorporated into the Christmas Story in weeks 9 & 10, with Leigh Newton's Aussie Christmas songs as Bev Eccleston & Carys tell the Christmas story.

Families tell us it is the combination of hospitality, pastoral care and a good quality program that sets us apart from other playgroups. We intentionally build relationships with the families and it is always sad to say farewell to them at the end of their 'season' with us. So it has been a special thrill to be able to provide on-going connections with a growing number of families through Messy Church, the Community Program, and now through Mainly Music and Godly Play, particularly as through these activities we are able to extend the relationship to their spiritual lives. This was part of our original 'dream', and it is exciting to see that dream becoming reality three years down the track.

We acknowledge with much appreciation the support we have had from Council and the people of BUC over the past three years, and in particular the 10am hospitality team, those who support Lynona & Cogs at the 12 o'clock Mums & Bubs group, John & Bruce for both their practical help and for providing a much-appreciated male presence each week, the Property Committee people for installing the bike shed & garden bed, fixing things as required and above all understanding the vision, Brian and Jan for managing the finances, Lynona for her oversight of the 12 o'clock Mums & Bubs group, and particularly the planning team of Carys, Jean, Glenis, Marnie, Cogs & parent rep Simonne for their huge commitment of time, talent, unflagging enthusiasm & effort that keep it happening, week by week, term by term, and year by year.

Marnie Agnew
November 2012

6.4 Community Program

Well I certainly hit the ground running this year! It has been a steep learning curve but an enjoyable one, and I have learnt so much in the past 9 months. Admittedly I have approached the role with caution, not knowing anything about the Program itself and how it is run, but I also wanted to maintain the great work my predecessor, Helen Sampson, had done throughout last year. Now that I have well and truly settled in to the rhythm of the Program, I am now happy to consider what may lie ahead for next year.

We lost a few classes this year, including the Felting, Pilates, Paper Making, and Introduction to Drawing & Painting classes. This has been reflected in the number of enrolments but despite not having these classes, enrolment numbers have still been strong. These classes have still been requested by visitors to the Program, so we will continue to seek potential new tutors. At the time of writing this report, enrolment numbers stand at 290 but this does not include our casual attendees for our monthly Gardening class with Mary Thomas nor our Continuing Learning sessions run by Anne Grear and Joan Hazeldine. This also does not indicate that many of our members enrol in more than one class.

The Art and Yoga classes have seen an increase in attendees this year, proving to be very popular in addition to our four Patchwork & Quilting classes. Zumba and Keep Fit classes are still going well with numbers increasing slowly through the year, and hope these will continue next year. Sadly, our Mosaics class is not continuing next year due to the tutor obtaining more permanent part-time work. We will be sad to see her go but wish her the very best in her new position.

Requests for a Cake Decorating have still poured in but finding a tutor has been a real struggle, but we will hopefully obtain a well experienced tutor to teach in a workshop format rather than weekly classes. As an alternative, we trialled a Cupcake Decorating class in term 3 which had three dedicated attendees each week. We are considering revisiting this again next year in the workshop format.

We ran three main fundraising events this year: Pancake Day (\$239.90), Australia's Biggest Morning Tea (\$350.75), and Mother's Day sale (\$80.65). There were a few things I learnt and will do differently next year, and I would love to extend the Pancake Day celebrations beyond the Community Program next year to include the greater Church community and the local community itself. We also held a very successful morning/afternoon tea on both Wednesday and Thursday at the end of term 2, to help the Patchwork & Quilting class finish the quilts to be raffled at the Roundabout Craft Fair & Exhibition for Flora in Papua and help cover costs for the Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes of Love.

I've learnt tea and coffee are an important part of the Community Program! We've continued with the Fair Trade tea and coffee and this year we trialled having Cadbury Fundraising chocolates available for members to purchase, something which I think the members have enjoyed having.

Many important changes have occurred with Facebook and how it operates, requiring some changes in how our existing group functions. Facebook is a valuable resource for the Program and can be used to publicise classes and events to a younger age group.

We started this year desperately needing another extra crèche worker or two to assist Shannon and Sue Fisher. We welcomed Trish Brice and Charlotte Fisher to the team and they have helped on Wednesday mornings when we have close to 20 children. The crèche is a very important part of the Program and many parents are grateful to have a facility to look after their children whilst they are in a class.

I am sincerely indebted to all the dedicated tutors who come each week and really appreciate the years of experience they all possess. I am very grateful for the assistance received from two fantastic volunteers, Judith Terrell and Janet Paull, who come each week and help out with many other duties that help make the Program run smoothly. Shannon and Charlotte from the crèche also often help in the office and with other tasks each week and I'm grateful for their help.

I cannot forget the unseen furniture volunteers – Jim Alvery, Keith Rawolle, Frank Cornish, and Ken Bardsley - without whom we would have no furniture set up and packed down each week. We are currently on a search to obtain more volunteers to help our core group of 4 men, to ease the load and learn what happens, as soon it will be time for these helpers to take a break. We celebrated Franks's 80th birthday not long ago with a great chocolate cake and a box of chocolates, both of which are his favourite I've been told. Earlier in the year we also celebrated the 17 years of service given by Josie Dennison, after she injured her back and made the hard decision to discontinue setting up the trading table each week. We knew this was an important element of the Program and wanted to continue offering it each week. This task was happily taken over by Community Program member, Susan Duncombe-Wall, and is often helped by Shannon and Charlotte too. We are very thankful for Josie's service to the Community Program and I was thrilled to see her last week having recovered from her injury and back on her feet.

We have also welcomed a new Pastoral Carer, Bev Eccleston, who has become our Community Carer on Thursday mornings. She has filled the role previously occupied by Doris Young who stepped down from the role at the beginning of the year. We are grateful for Doris's service to the Program as the Thursday morning carer and we are thrilled to see her in the Program still when she visits on occasion.

This year we held a stall at the CoroAlive 175 Community Festival on Sunday October 28th. It was a great afternoon and we talked to many people about the Community Program and the upcoming

Craft Fair too. We hope this will prove to be fruitful and successful venture, hopefully attracting more people both past and new members. It was a great afternoon finding out how well known the Community Program is and the reputation it holds within the local community. This echoes the sentiment expressed by Helen in her report last year, that the importance of this Program and what it means to the members should not be underestimated. I have heard some great stories this year from members about how they came to start attending classes and why they have stayed here. This is something I would love to document and share in some form with the local community next year.

The Roundabout Craft Fair & Exhibition quickly looms and there is much yet to be done. It's been hard work so far organising this event but I have loved it, and I know there is more to come in the weeks leading up to the Fair. Local businesses have been great in supporting us with many donating items to use in our raffle. We are pleased to have Peter Goers join us on the Saturday to draw the raffle prizes! Peter is well known for supporting community groups and I know some members are very excited about him coming to the event.

There have been a few challenges throughout the year which have made me think about how the Program operates. Advertising in general is always difficult and we are currently reviewing how to do this in an efficient but cost effective manner. The Blackwood UC website is a great resource but we need to reach out to the local community to let them know we are here and draw them in. We have a great resource in The Shed and they have been given so many bikes to fix that they no longer have any room to store them! Earlier in the year they sent a consignment of bicycles to the APY Lands and have voiced their desire to take the bikes up personally.

In looking ahead for the Community Program, I was very excited a few weeks ago whilst looking through some old documents to discover that the Program started in 1974. This means that in 2014 the Community Program has operated for 40 years! This is definitely a cause for celebration and many ideas have already been suggested to commemorate such a fantastic occasion.

It has been a great year with quite a few challenges. There are so many things I would love to achieve in the next year, so fingers crossed I will be back next year to continue!

Riki Owens-Bennett

Community Program Coordinator

6.5 Library Service

The library's aim is to support the mission of the church in its commitment to justice, learning, service and care. To achieve this, books, DVDs and CDs are purchased and also appropriate items are chosen from those donated.

We are reminded of the plight of the Palestinians in the powerful book "I shall not hate" by Izzeldin Abuelaish. "The flight of an eagle: the dreaming of Ruby Hammond" by Margaret Forte is the biography of a remarkable aborigine.

Denis Edward's book "How God acts: creation, redemption and spiritual divine action" is a "wonderful lucid theology supporting a convincing vision of how God is at work in the universe". There is a helpful chapter on "Prayers of Intercession". Bill Loader gives an introduction to Luke in his DVD "Year of Luke: windows into the text."

Among other additions to the library are Jerome Berryman's book on "Teaching Godly Play" and Naomi Starkey's book on "Good Enough Mother". Both these books will be helpful in the "Messy Church" and Godly Play programs.

In her book "New life in the mourning: hope when the relationship ends" Vicky Legge gives practical guidance to navigate the end of a relationship. Speaking from her own personal journey she suggests how to overcome negative emotions and grief, and to heal and find wholeness and move on choosing to live an abundant life of purpose.

Thank you to everyone who has donated books, DVDs and CDs and who have suggested items for the library to purchase.

Charles W. Eliot has said "Books are the quietest and most constant of friends: they are the most accessible and wisest of counsellors, and the most patient of teachers."

Joy Belling

6.6 Mission and Justice

In this congregation many members act out their Christian service and witness in multiple local, national and international settings, making contributions to many justice movements. Our collective mission is to encourage, support and give focus to this work, working with the Urban Mission Network and the wider Uniting Church through its Mission and Service Fund.

We are grateful for the many commitments of individual congregation members:

There are all those who work through the Circle of Friends. We provide venue and chair too! There are linkages with rural congregations and sales of their produce to assist the UCA's Frontier Services. A couple of dozen folk assist in the annual Christmas Bowl Badge day and many are long term individual supporters to the tune of some \$6,000 per year. Volunteers help with Meals on Wheels, the Inter-church programmes of Beacon and Kids Hope and groups like Save The Children, Oxfam's Book sales and South Pacific School Aid's recycling of books for overseas. (Fifty tonnes sent last year!). The property committee have helped re-shape the Church's environmental footprint with water-saving activities. We have promoted Fair trade and Outback Pride products, Tear Fund and the Church's Disaster Fund.

BUC volunteers spent time on a library project in the UCA's partner church in the Philippines. The equivalent of an air-fare was given for Act For Peace partners in Africa, while others linked with generations of pilgrims on the St. Diego de Compostella trail or maintained contact and raised funds for our partners in West Papua. Then there are the shoeboxes wrapped with love for children overseas and the solidarity through Pink Ladies, the Anzac day vigils of the young and links with the Kurna people through Warriparinga. We need better links with the Blackwood Reconciliation group too.

The list above is incomplete but illustrative. The co-ordinating group sometimes don't hear of new initiatives until they are over. Sometimes we may feel that too much is being promoted at once. For that reason it would be good if we could be better at forward planning to avoid divided efforts as we journey with people and a planet in need. Contact us if you have new proposals.

For 2013, we recommend, that as has happened this year we attempt to relate with the worshipping community at least five times:- as we enter Lent (Care and Share in Lent), on Environmental Sabbath (Sunday nearest June 6), on Torres Strait and Aboriginal Islander week mid-year, Social Justice Sunday in September and on Overseas Aid, through Act for Peace, in Advent.

Our theme in 2012 was **DEEP PEACE** reminding us: -- Jesus' Peace involves justice as well as environmental harmony: it comes as we work in partnership with other agencies, churches and communities.

Deep peace of the Son of Peace be with you all, *Alastair, Heather, Malcolm*

6.7 Urban Mission Network

I would like to direct you to the Urban Mission Network website www.urbannetwork.org.au and where they have recently published their 2012 Annual Report and November Bulletin. This is the best way to keep in touch. The BUC website also provides a link to this website.

There is a calendar for the year of events that are worthwhile for churches and congregations similar to ours in size and position in their community.

I have not attended everything this year, but did enjoy Playgroup at the Sea last month at Semaphore. The U/C did a wonderful event attended by 100's of toddlers.

We go to different churches each time and will have been to Bridgewater by the time congregational meeting (Nov. 15th). Anyone is welcome and we often carpool.

Wendy Norris

6.8 11am Congregation Report

The 11 am congregation continues to work well within the limitations that age is imposing on its members. We try to keep up with Pastoral care and concerns through a network of Carers, and this system continues to provide a sharing and caring approach in this community. As always these programs can only be successful if there are dedicated folk to do the work behind the scenes. My grateful thanks to Jan Wiseman as she diligently works within this group, and also to the Lead carers who are able to call or visit others within this group. As so often happens, some of our older members cannot always attend so pastoral contact is vital. We were saddened by the death of Mrs Peg Beverley who was a long time member of the 11am congregation.

The group still meets for a shared Sunday lunch with one planned for December.

Dried fruit sales to all the Blackwood communities (9.15 am, 11am, Friday friends and Community program) has resulted in substantial monies to Frontier services and to the Community Program. I thank all customers for their support in this valuable Caring program-the Riverland grower benefits, the purchaser has top grade produce and Frontier Services receive the profit of over \$1200 in the past 8 months. Likewise the Community program has benefitted from sales at the Open days but that amount is listed with plants from the stall.

First Friday Friends continues to be a safe friendly place for members of the church and wider community to meet. An eclectic mix of speakers and activities have again provided interest to all who attend and I thank all who help with this group for their willing input –it is truly appreciated.

The Flower Roster Ladies must be acknowledged as they help to make the foyer and chapel an attractive and welcoming area.

Mary Thomas

6.9 Helen Lee Memorial Trust Fund

The purpose of the Trust Fund is to provide funds for the purpose of developing worship and music within the BUC congregation in accordance with the Trust Deed established in 2007. The Fund was established with an initial capital of \$5,000 which was added to by a further \$5,100 in 2008. The fund monies were invested with UCIInvest with interest paid 6 monthly. It is intended to be a perpetual fund with the value preserved by re-investing interest payments to maintain the initial value over time. To do this the average CPI figure for Australia is used to determine the capital value of the fund at 30 June each year with any surplus being made available for grants. At 30 June 2012 the capital value of the fund was \$11,069 and the total interest earned was \$2,454.

Four grants have been awarded to date. These grants are as follows:

Robin Mann music weekend in 2010	\$500
Registration Fees for M Agnew at "Gods Play #2" in NSW 2011	\$300
Registration fees for M Agnew, C Penny, Rev C Smith to attend "Church & ... Conference" 2011	\$275
Registration M Agnew for Godly Play conference June 2012	\$180

We would be pleased to hear of ideas for initiatives that might be supported by future grants from the Helen Lee Memorial Trust Fund.

Alastair Blake, Alison Sutcliffe and Brian Pickering
Fund Trustees

6.10 Kid's Hope

"Building Caring Relationships ...One Child, One Hour, One Church, One School"

It is easy to write a report about this programme as the good that is done by the 12 active people involved in mentoring at Blackwood Primary School is constant, rewarding and significant in the lives of the children and mentors involved. That is not to say that it is always easy as some of us find getting to know how our child's mind works a challenge. Whatever situation we find ourselves in, the job is most rewarding even for the slightest achievement that we make such as finding a game or activity that the child likes which helps shape the hour that we spend together. We have had considerable support from the school and we try to support them and especially the children whom we are trying to serve.

Some of our experiences have been interesting such as one child who was unable to regularly attend at school. The child's mentor turned up time and time again to find that he wasn't there, but he kept going ensuring that when the child did attend that he was there for him. Such faithfulness is wonderful and very selfless. Another mentor travelled to a school behaviour support centre, well away from Blackwood, for at least a term to provide ongoing mentoring for the child when she was out of her comfort zone. Yet another is working with two older boys who need a challenge and they are building a model V8 Engine. We most often develop a strong attachment to the child that we mentor which is self motivating and keeps us at it trying to think of new things to do to motivate and challenge. The teachers do their best to support us as we strike any blocks or need more ideas.

During the year we gained two new mentors one of whom is yet to be matched with a child and other mentors have had changes of circumstances which have resulted in having a rest, mentoring their child at the child's home or changing children as a result of them moving to other schools.

We always have need of new mentors as the school finds additional children who would profit from the programme. Some mentors need a break too as they rise to meet other challenges in their lives so if those reading this would like to join with us to make a difference and to find a cause worth doing, here it is. I would love to talk anyone who wants to know more.

Ian Penny
Kids Hope Coordinator
Blackwood Uniting Church

6.11 Mitcham Hills InterChurch Council

Despite resignations from the Chair, and the Treasurer, commitments for this year are being fulfilled. Ross Hill Brown (Belair Anglican) has stepped into the Chair position and Anarra Walding (Blackwood Hills Baptist) is picking up the Treasurer's role.

The small committee who planned the Old Fashioned Sunday School Picnic at Weymouth Oval on October 7 was rewarded with a sunny day and a reasonably representative crowd from the churches in the area. Games, activities, raspberry cordial and a Treasure Hunt made a day of fun for young and of memories for older!

The Blackwood Christmas Pageant early in December is a public display of the churches in the area working (walking) together. At the head of the Parade we have a grand opportunity to show our strength. Come join us!

A future plan for the Inter-church Council could be to explore ways in which our individual traditions may benefit from understanding traditions of other churches in the area, "receptive ecumenism".

Christian Pastoral Support Workers

Some anxious days and months were experienced as the High Court Challenge to the legitimacy of Christian workers in Government Schools was assessed. The Government developed a solution to provide the legislative basis the Court indicated was necessary and allowed Government funding to continue. Some CPSW's had their hours cut and some schools voted to pay for the extra hours (showing how much the CPSW's are valued in our schools.)

At the end of each year, the MHICC financially supports the giving of a Transition Bag to graduating Year 7 students in the area. Among the contents is a list of local Youth activities (including church youth groups) and a magazine specially prepared by the CPSW's covering relevant topics for students enter the wider world of High School. Donations towards these bags can be made through Gloria McArthur.

BEACON Emergency Relief

This important service continues to operate from the Church of Christ on Wednesdays between 9am -1pm. There has been a 25% increase in the client base this year. Funding through appeals, Dollar days, personal donations, volunteering at the Lions' Shed in October, local business sponsorship and support, supplements monies provided through Grant Applications. Volunteers participate in training programs provided by FaHCSIA and Lutheran Care.

Christmas Hampers

With the assistance of the Lions' Club these hampers will again be given to families supported through the program this year.

Gloria McArthur & Bev Eccleston - Church nominees to MHICC

6.12 Young Adults Group (YAG)

Heidi Ross (nee McNamara) has continued to lead YAG in 2012, meeting fortnightly in school term times. Earlier in the year, Andrea Carr, joined the team and provides valuable leadership to the group. It's great to have her on board and she fits in well with the small group of young adults that attend.

There have been various activities during the year, including Games Nights, Christmas in July, Aquatic Centre, Movie Night to name just a few of the themed, fun evenings that have been had. We did a Can the Can drive at Foodland as a charity night, as well as knitting squares for blankets. Some of us also attended the Adelaide Repertory production of Arthur Miller's play "All My Sons" that Andrea starred in. It has been a good year and we are finishing with Ginger Bread House Making on the 23rd November and a Beach Break up on 7th December.

Some of YAG (Young Adults Group) met on Friday 9th November 2012 to discuss YAG in 2013 and agreed to the following general principles.

Here is the summary of the meeting provided by Heidi:

1. The potential to join up with Church of Christ for a combined youth group, this was supported by all. They also don't have a young-adults group so we could investigate morphing the current YAG (Young Adults Group but for 12-17 year olds) to a true young adults group (ages approx. 16-25), given all of our current members are in that age range.
2. Did we want to become involved in the new Mitcham Council community centre – Friday afternoon/evening youth events? The consensus was yes.
3. I will continue to lead our group (YAG) next year, or be involved in joint leadership with Church of Christ.
4. Charlotte is available to pin up posters/programs etc. around the church and Blackwood to get some more advertising.

A main issue for the group is we would benefit from some external advertising around the community and Blackwood area to invite more youth.

Rev Coral Cogs Smith & Heidi Ross

6.13 Website

The [BUC website](#) continues to serve as a portal of information to both our BUC community and the wider community. We appreciate those people who take the time to comment that they found out about “such and such” via the website; it really has become a tool that reaches a wide variety of people.

I really must thank the team of people who ‘look after’ particular elements and in so-doing keep the website alive and up to date. Riki Owens-Bennett has done wonders with keeping the [Community Program](#)’s pages up to date including their newsletters, but she also uploads the general BUC Newsletter each week to the [Downloads](#) page along with the current Roster. Marnie Agnew has her hands full with extending the outreach of the church through the web pages for children and families – [Roundabout Playgroup](#) and [Children in Church](#). You will have seen Bryan Belling’s “[Recent Additions to the Library](#)” in the newsletter, but he also keeps these up to date on the Library’s pages. (He’s always looking for someone who’d like to do a book review if you have an idea!) Enid Ninnes finds interesting and thought-provoking quotes and uploads these to the [Home Page](#) where they can be found (near the bottom) as “Quote of the Week” as well as the [M&J Update](#). Many [Youth](#) and [Young Adults](#) events are looked after on pages created by Heidi McNamara. Ray Bown stands by to help with keeping issues up to date and looks after the [Walking Group](#) and [Finance](#) pages.

NEW! Rev Dr Dean Eland now has page for [Reflections](#) which you may wish to visit frequently – “Ministers’ Musings... This is your chance to visit some of the ideas shared at Sunday worship.”

A very special thank you, however, really must be extended to Penny Harper for her updating of the [BUC Calendar of Events](#). She keeps this calendar updated week after week making sure that people have access to current events and to give people planning an event a clear view of what other events are on when and whether they may clash with their planning.

Our presence on the world wide web is also extended via the various Facebook groups that are set up and looked after by different people within the church ([Blackwood Uniting Church](#), [Community Program](#), [BUC Young Adults](#), [BUC YAG](#), and [Messy Church](#)). Many lively conversations can be found there as well as recent event photos. (Links to these can also be found on our Home Page – right hand column.) Thank you to everyone who’s set these up and to those who contribute!

For those of you interested to know how much ‘attention’ the website gets, here are a few pieces of information gleaned from our analytics. During the month of October 2012, our BUC website had a total of 518 Visits with 72% being New Visitors. The page most visited (excluding the Home Page) during this period was the Roundabout Craft Fair & Exhibition page accounting for just over 4% of all pageviews. As you can see, the Fair attracts a lot of attention. In the months preceding the lead-up to this event, the Home Page (18% with many repeat visitors), Recent Additions to the Library, Downloads, Children in Church, Ministers, Community Program, News, Contact,

Roundabout Playgroup and Events form the top ten pageviews. All these pages get many repeat visits. The number of people viewing our pages over mobile devices is steadily climbing.

We really would appreciate more people who would like to be involved with this lively website and willing to 'look after' a particular area of interest to them. More people on the team mean more ideas and a better website to carry our news to our own and the wider community. Don't worry about needing to be a geek – it's all pretty easy (really!) and training will be provided. Please get in touch via buc.website@gmail.com.

Karen Collins