

2013

Congregational Meeting



**Blackwood
Uniting
Church**

Sunday June 2



Blackwood Uniting Church

the church on the roundabout

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

June 2nd Congregational Meeting Agenda Blackwood Uniting Church 10.15am

- | | | | |
|-----|--|----------------------------|----|
| 1. | Apologies and Attendance sheet | | |
| 2. | Minutes of AGM of congregation Sunday November 18 th 2012 | | 3 |
| 3. | Matters Arising | | |
| 4. | Spoken Reports | | |
| 4.1 | Minister's Reports | Revs. A Brown and C. Smith | 5 |
| 4.2 | Church Council | Ian Penny | 7 |
| 4.3 | Finance | Phil Megaw | 10 |
| 5. | Reflection on spoken reports | | |
| 6. | Tabled Reports | | |
| 6.1 | Property | Tony Otworowski | 12 |
| 6.2 | Community outreach | Rev. C Smith | 14 |
| | Family Ministry | M. Agnew, Cogs, C Penny | |
| | Community Program | Riki Owens-Bennett | |
| 6.3 | Website | Karen Collins | 18 |
| 6.4 | Mission and Justice | Anne Magarey | 19 |
| 6.5 | Urban Mission Network | Wendy Norris | 20 |
| 6.6 | Kid's Hope | Ian Penny | 21 |
| 6.7 | Conversations with Blackwood CoC | Ian Penny | 22 |
| 6.8 | Flora | Jane Bassham | 24 |
| 7. | Reflection on Tabled reports | | |
| 8. | Next Meeting: A.G.M. Sunday November 17 th 2013 | | |
| 9. | Benediction: Ministers | | |

2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Blackwood Uniting Church

Sunday 18 November 2012

- Wendy Norris (chair of congregation) welcomed 83 people to the meeting and opened with an excerpt from a thoughtful article by Andrew Dutney entitled “Who is the Head of the Church?”
- The minutes of the 2011 AGM were accepted –consensus
- Ray Bown presented the first spoken report about the Mission plan for the next 2 years based on our vision statement:
 1. Justice
 2. Learning – celebrating
 3. Learning – community
 4. Service
 5. Care
- This mission plan was endorsed by the meeting-consensus.
- Phil Megaw presented treasurer’s report which included the projected budget for 2013 and a review of the 2012 budge. An offering increase is needed. Report received by consensus.
- Ray Bown reported on conversations with the Church of Christ in Blackwood. He presented 2 proposals for the meeting’s consideration
 1. Church of Christ will be responsible for worship in the National park on January 6 and Belair congregation will be represented as in previous years.
 2. Conversations with the church of Christ will continue next year. Both proposals were endorsed by the meeting with consensus.
- Nominations for positions as Elders, on Council and for Congregation Secretary were received and the meeting voted for all to be elected:

Angela Smith and Liz Collins as Elders

Alan Nannes, Bec English, Adrian Brown and Chris Bray for council

Dave Smith as Secretary of the congregation

Lynona Hawkins as Congregation Rep to Community Group
- They were warmly congratulated.
- Announcements about the Craft Fair on 23 and 24 November were made.
- Rev. Dean Eland presented his report regarding the core pastoral ministries plan and invited everyone to ask the question: where is your passion, so that the work

load can be shared between the 5 areas outlined in the Mission statement. The meeting endorsed the report by consensus.

- Rev. Coral (Cogs) Smith presented the Outreach Report and outlined the plan for family and children's ministries for next year, which is available in a brochure. The report was endorsed by the meeting-consensus. The people involved in these areas were thanked for their work.
- Ray Bown presented the Church Council report and highlighted the busy year including the departure of Rev. Leanne Jenski, the visit of Carolyn Kitto and the work of Rev. Dean Eland as supply minister. Ian penny proposed a vote of thanks to Ray for his work on council over the years and as Chair of Council from which he is resigning this year. The meeting supported this and endorsed the report by consensus.
- Tabled reports were opened for questions. Regarding Friday night Meals Jan Furness told the meeting of Brian Langsford's part in providing bread for meals and this was noted and thanks given to him. The Christmas meal is on December 21.
- Wendy Norris reported that Urban Mission Network will meet at Blackwood Uniting on May 19 2013 and help will be needed to host that meeting.
- Rev. Cogs closed the meeting in prayer at 11.55am.

4.1 Minister's Report to the Congregational Meeting

Over the past three months it has been my privilege to serve the Blackwood Uniting Church as its minister. Let me assure you that it is an entirely different experience from "simply" being a member of the congregation.

I would like to say a particular thank you to the vast array of people who, together, make this worshipping community what it is in its commitment to our mission. It is very much a team effort and there are so many of you who give so willingly of your time. It is, however, of some concern that we need to be careful to "manage" our volunteers as we can so easily be on the verge of pushing people to the edge of burn-out. To this end we need to be careful before we embark on too many new programs.

During my ministry I have sought to engage in preparing the way for Phil Hoffmann to commence his ministry with us in a very short time. It is clear that while we have been able to operate as a congregation we have felt the absence of a full time Minister of the Word over the past nine or ten months. During this time I would pay tribute to "Cogs" Smith as she has worked extra time and sought to plug some gaps. I am sure she will welcome Phil's arrival as well.

During Cog's absence on Long Service Leave we were very fortunate to have had Robyn Caldicott as her replacement. Robyn's skills as a caring and sensitive person combined with her considerable administrative skills meant that we were more than adequately served. We trust that it will not be long before she receives an offer of a placement and can be ordained as a minister of the word. In the meantime she has gone as supply minister to Rosefield UC in the merry-go-round world of ministry.

During these last three months we have seen a number of things happen. You will have noticed the introduction of a short item each week in the newsletter under the heading, "Something to think about" and that this also appears on the BUC website. Each week, if you are keen or miss the sermon you can also view the week's sermon on the website.

We are also endeavouring to tidy up the roster system by putting them on our pastoral care software program. This will take a little while but when it is up and running it will mean that we can avoid clashes which have some people doing about three things at once.

We also introduced a thanksgiving and covenant service where we could thank all of you for your commitment to the work of this congregation and to renew our commitment to continue. This service would normally have been held earlier in the New Year and perhaps this can happen in a more timely fashion next year.

We combined with our Church of Christ friends for a very successful Palm Sunday service which was a witness to faith as we journeyed from our church to the Church of Christ and then to the Waite Reserve for Communion. It is planned that we should join together for worship on Advent Sunday and to have a BBQ lunch together in August.

Worship continues to be served by a whole range of people. We have had difficulties with the software programme we use on Sundays and it recently crashed, sending shockwaves through those concerned. We finished up buying a new programme which promises to be

more user friendly but which will require those who use it to develop a friendly relationship with it.

I look forward to the induction of the Rev Phil Hoffmann on June 12th and to being able to experience his leadership as the BUC moves into a new period of its life and witness and pray that both Phil and Cogs will be blessed by the collegial partnership in ministry to the Blackwood Uniting Church community.

The Rev Dr Adrian Brown, Supply Minister

4.2 Church Council

Since the last Council Report in November much has happened in the life of the church and Council. The events and issues are as follows:

- **Ministerial support**

- * The Rev Dr Dean Eland completed his term of office in early January after five months with us supporting especially our future planning. Dean's knowledge of especially church management and structure was an important gift as we worked towards a new way of council linking with the 5 Mission areas of the church. His preaching and presence in the church was valued highly.

- * The Rev Dr Adrian Brown joined us as Minister of the Word from the first of March and continued the strong support for Council planning especially in policy development and in helping us further our investment opportunities. Adrian has been an important support in this time between Ministers of the Word with his leadership, management, preaching and his willingness to get involved with a wide range of issues including communication, finance and improvements in worship. As one of us we look forward to his continuing work within our church. Thanks Adrian!

- * The Rev Coral Smith (Cogs) has worked extra time during the break between the Rev Leanne and the arrival of the Rev Phil Hoffmann to help maintain stability within the church besides juggling moving into a new home, organising and leading worship services during January and February and then for the Morris Dancers' service in March during her Long Service Leave, plus extra visitors from interstate. All this besides having a knee operation. Thanks Cogs for what you do and the extra time you have provided for us over the last 11 months.

- * Robyn Caldicott also helped by replacing Cogs whilst she was on long service and sick leave. Her assistance was also greatly appreciated in helping to bridge the gap whilst we waited for our new Minister of the Word to arrive.

- * The Rev Phil Hoffmann was appointed in early February to take up his appointment as from his induction on the 12 June. We await his appointment with eagerness as he will bring new insights, vitality and especially continuity as we have had close to 12 months since the Rev Leanne left.

- **Priorities**

- * Early in the year the Council set the following priorities for the year:

- > Establishing the five Mission Areas. This has involved the Council discussing how it might support groups within the 5 areas and what form this support might take. Discussion led to Council members linking themselves with each of the five areas apart from those involved in Finance and Property which were considered significant roles in themselves. The Council has determined that the role of the council members was not to take over from any of the groups within any of the Mission Areas but to do the following:

- < Provide support where necessary for groups and leaders.

- < Assist in the review of the implementation of plans and priorities in each of the mission areas.
- < Foster well being within the groups involved in a mission area.
- < Provide a link with Council and report on the well being and progress of the groups within the Mission Area.

Each of the Mission Areas is different as described on the following page and therefore will require different ways in which Council members operate. For example Justice is one group and so a representative of Council on that group is sufficient where as Worship, Service and Community Learning and Care involve several groups. Council member involvement is still being worked through with one group operating already with a Council member involved e.g. Justice. A Celebrating and Learning (Worship) Group has formed consisting of Council members to provide more structure and direction in this area. Whereas Community Learning (Community Program), Community Service and the Care Mission Areas are still working through how they might support the various groups within their Mission Area. Once The Rev Phil Hoffmann arrives I expect that we will make further progress.

- > Communication- A group has already formed to review how and what we do which has involved changes to the Newsletter, Noticeboards, the website and will be finalising recommendations to Council concerning improving the worship space and the back entrance shortly.
- > Finalising the updating of the Church membership Roll
- > Developing a policy on General Appeals for money
- > Developing a Privacy Policy, an Occupational Health Policy and reviewing and updating all Church policies.

We have besides the above worked on updated arrangements for payment of staff and leaders in the Community Program on Catastrophic Fire Rating Days and approved the establishment of a Trust Fund for the collection of funds for Flora Manswara.

Thank you to all Council members especially the Executive for their tireless work and to members of the Finance and Property Committees who do so much to maintain and improve our church.

A special thankyou to Alan Ninnes who has resigned from Council because of his move to Victor Harbour. Alan has over many years contributed not only to the life of this church but to further the work of Council as a council member and Chair. Best wishes to Alan and Enid as they make their new life at Victor and thanks for what you have done for this church and its outreach.

Ian Penny

Chair BUC Council.

JUSTICE Solidarity and Partnership	CELEBRATING and LEARNING Sunday worship	COMMUNITY LEARNING	COMMUNITY SERVICE	CARE
<p>Groups</p> <p>Mission and Justice Coordinating Group Deals with overall planning plus developing links with the local Kurna group and Synod objectives eg Congress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English language support group - Wednesday Mornings West Papua Group Connection to Blackwood Circle of Friends Some Community Forums in conjunction with the community programme <p>Council Rep and Link: Ian Penny</p>	<p>Faith Development Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bible study groups – weekly Church Camps - every other year - Library - weekly librarian and support people - Book Club - monthly Godly Play Prayer Groups: Inner Pilgrimage monthly - Both Service groups - weekly- (rostered) - Monday morning prayer group – weekly <p>Worship Support Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9.15am Worship Leaders (rostered) 11am Readers rostered from about 6 to 8 people Baptisms Messy church Welcomers/greeters Stewards Chair People rostered Children’s activities in worship Data Projectionists and Sound Operators Music and organists organists, two bands,(musicians plus singers) Bus Drivers - 11am Resthaven) Stewards/greeters rostered on Morning Tea roster Communion Preparers Flower Roster – Wedding and funeral arrangements inc verger, catering group, Resthaven monthly Communion service <p>Council Reps/Links: Rev Dr Adrian Brown, Chris Bray, Bec English and The Rev Phil Hoffmann. This group will form a wider group.</p>	<p>Learning Groups (Weekday activities and events)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BUC Community Programme Committee activities Evening Forums (support from Justice Coordinating Group) Mainly Music New –Possibly a Men’s Shed and Community Garden <p>Council Links: Cogs, Ken Bardsley, Carys Penny.</p>	<p>Service Groups (Practical actions and sharing)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Friday night meals – weekly – Flinders Medical Centre Helpers - rostered on weekly Flinders Medical Centre Worship Service Group rostered on several times a year Mitcham Hills Inter-church Council Inc Schools Ministry(Chaplains PSCW) and Beacon Kids Hope Church of Christ Discussions Monday Play Group Mothers and Babies group <p>Council Links: To be confirmed</p>	<p>Groups and fellowship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pastoral Care committees to support both services Clusters (small social groups) – 10 groups Follow up for Baptisms Youth Newcomers <p>Council Links: Angela Smith, Liz Collins, Alastair Blake plus The Rev Phil Hoffmann</p>

4.3 Finance and Stewardship Committee

Our Finance and Stewardship Committee comprises Phil Megaw (Chairperson), Jan Furness (Treasurer of the main Church Council Account), Brian Pickering (Treasurer of both the Property group and the Community Outreach program), Mark Gill, Ray Bown and a minister's representative, recently Adrian Brown.

We also assist with financial administration of the Helen Lee Trust Fund and in the current set up of the Flora Manswara Trust Fund.

Financial summary reports are produced after the end of each month for presentation to the Church Executive or the Church Council (depending on which month it is) so that we can regularly monitor the trends. These are available to anyone else upon request, so contact me if you have a query.

2012 outcome

In 2012 we incurred a \$19,500 deficit so that we could continue our Mission Budget 2012 programs (budget was for a \$16,000 deficit) and so we used some of our savings to keep carrying out our Mission Goals. With Rev Leanne Jensi leaving us in July 2012 and then using part time supply minister support from Rev Dean Eland, ministerial costs were under our budgeted figure, but on the income side the key item of offerings were down by about \$10,000 below our target. It was great that the church facilities were used extensively by more groups in 2012, so income for that was up, but so were the costs of keeping the facilities going. Once again the Property Committee did a great job of looking after and improving our facilities, making best use of the funds available.

The 2012 accounts have been audited and a copy of them will be placed with the records of this meeting. The Auditor Peter Whiting signed them off in March 2013.

In November 2012 the Council and congregation endorsed the Mission Based Budget for 2013.

In November 2012 we also conducted a Giving Program. The challenges financially was to increase our offering income by about \$23,000 per year (or 17%) so that we could complete our Congregation's agreed Mission Goals and have a balanced 2013 budget (ie income and expenses both about \$275,000). Thank you to all who considered this matter prayerfully and responded.

The outcome was a promised annual offering increase of about \$13,500, a 9% increase, leaving us with a \$10,000 shortfall.

Progress in 2013

Until the commencement of Rev Phil Hoffmann with us in June this year we have gratefully utilised the services of Rev Cogs Smith with additional hours and had part time supply

ministry from Robyn Caldicott and Rev Adrian Brown. We anticipate that the financial savings in ministry costs will offset the shortfall in the offering income budgeted for 2013.

So far the income and expenses of our Mission Budget programs are generally on track, so a balanced financial outcome in 2013 is possible, but only if anticipated activities like fundraising take place, so let's all get involved, have some fun and make this happen.

The financial outcome of the Garage Sale is not available at the time of preparing this report, but it should be broadly on target.

We are benefitting from the \$96,750 bequest we received in 2011, with the interest income being used to support our current Mission Budget 2013 activities.

Looking Ahead

We wish to flag now that 2014 could be a tough year financially, so how we plan for that and rise to the challenge needs prayerful consideration over the next few months.

Phil Megaw

Chairperson, Finance and Stewardship Committee

15th May 2013.

6.1 Property

1. Ministry Committee

Chairman: **Tony Otworowski**

Secretary: **Vacant**

Treasurer: **Brian Pickering**

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

2. Finance

Position at 28 February 2013

2.1 Opening Balance 1 January 2013	\$10,467
2.2 Total income	\$ 3,232
2.3 Total revenue expenditure	\$ 5,439
2.4 Total Capital expenditure	\$ 1,035
2.5 Total Sundry & other expenditure	\$ 0
2.6 Closing Balance for period	\$ 7,225

3. Headline Achievements for Last Reporting Period

3.1 2013 Garage sale successfully planned and delivered

3.2 New office computer procured & installed

3.3 Hewett room upgrade

3.3.1 Painting completed

3.3.2 Acoustic ceiling tiles installed

3.3.3 New curtains

3.3.4 New storage cupboards installed

3.4 Rear Entry new tiles installed

3.5 New folding tables procured

3.6 Car park relined

3.7 New carpet squares procured for Play Group

3.8 Hard flooring stripped and repolished

3.9 Archiving of Church records proceeding

3.10 Manse leasing arrangements expired February 2013

4. 2013 Garage Sale

A big thank you to everyone, who participated in and supported our garage sale this year.

We currently have grossed \$10,000 with further money to come from the auctioned items.

We hope you enjoyed the experience and the funds raised will be put to good use in supporting the activities at Blackwood Uniting Church.

This fund raising activity is an important event in our calendar and we look forward to your support for the next one in 2015.

5. Your Property Ministry Making a Difference in 2013 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, experience and time 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 any member of the team.

6. Property Ministry Secretary Required

Our long serving Secretary, Bob Lyon, stepped down this year and anyone who may be interested in taking up this role please contact Tony Otworowski or Bob Lyon.

6.2 Community Outreach

Having recently been away on Long Service Leave, firstly I would like to express my thanks for the support and encouragement of the various members of the congregation. Secondly, I would also like to show my appreciation of the supply ministries of Ms Robyn Caldicott and Rev Dr Adrian Brown. Between the differing ministries, I could go away and relax with Dave, confident in the knowledge that the Outreach programs of BUC were in capable and caring hands.

Family Ministry involving – Playgroup (Pg), Mainly Music (MM), Messy Church (MC), Story Sunday (SS) and Children’s Corner during the 9.15 service (CC) - is unfolding well, with many families attending two or more programs. (See other reports for further details.)

Congregational involvement is seen in the term based rosters of Pg and MM. Also MC & SS have a pool of congregational volunteers that help out, being on a weekend this team varies depending on the availability of people. Both systems overall work well, although in the midst of such business the need to keep an eye on volunteers to avoid burnout, this is always a concern and a priority. Yet, it is delightful to work with people who are so passionate about family ministry, I feel like I am learning new things all the time, thank you.

Yet what is most exciting is that the families often express their thanks for what is provided by BUC. We are meeting the needs of these families in various ways through the various programs. And as we prepare for a “Messy” Baptism at the next MC, I believe that those families are experiencing BUC as “a place to consider the possibly of God”.

Community Program has continued to roll along this term. Riki’s ongoing health issues have seen Shannon and Charlotte - who both normally work in the crèche- take over more of the routine administration. We are very grateful to these two young women (who also share in the setting up and packing down as we are short of people in these roles, too). We are grateful to Meg who has stepped in the coordinator’s role the last couple of weeks and we wish her well on her holidays. Thank you, too.

In 2014, the Community Program will celebrate 40 years of community connections. We are planning to launch the celebrations at the next Roundabout Craft Fair and Exhibition later this year. Making the challenge for this year, not only how best do we celebrate these 40 years, but how can we also take the opportunity to refresh and renew this program which offers so much in terms of community building and social capital, that is making our building a place of care and refuge. There are many people who are part of the Community Program that spend more time in the church building than many of congregation! And so come to see it very much as their “home away from home” where they catch up with friends as well as create beautiful things or do other programs.

YAG – has become the **Young ADULTS Group**, as most of people involve are no longer “youth”. YAG continues to met with Heidi every second Friday in term time in a varied program. **Friday Meals** is going to evolve as the volunteer group changes.

In my wider church work, I have continued as a rep on the **Urban Mission Network Exec**, and I look forward to the next Urban Mission Network meeting which is an expo style meeting at BUC on the Thursday 13th of June. I have also participated in a recent **Selection Panel** for applicants considering ordination and am involved in a **Uniting College Formation Panel** for candidates. It is a privilege to be able to serve the wider church in these ways.

Last but not least, I am looking forward to working along **Rev Phil Hoffman**, as I am sure that he will have lots to offer BUC. Phil’s coming represents another cycle in the unfolding

life of BUC and the wider community with whom it connects. I am confident that it will be an interesting and enriching time for us.

Rev Coral Cogs Smith (Deacon)

Playgroup

We are now into our fourth year at Roundabout Playgroup and it continues to run smoothly through the procedures and principles already established. We now have a three-year program put together and this year we have started again with the Year 1 program, which we first did in 2010. This means planning and preparation time has been significantly reduced, although we do tweak some things as we go when necessary.

We have around 60 families currently on the roll, with a regular weekly attendance between 25 and 30 families. New babies are being born into current families so many families now have two children attending, and a significant number of families arrange for the grandparents to bring the children once the parent(s) go back to work. Our 12 o'clock baby playgroup is currently in recess as last year's babies are now toddlers. Some have moved on to the 10 o'clock group while other mums have gone back to work. We are currently waiting for a new group of new mothers to come.

We see this year as a year to build on the already increasing parent participation in the running of the playgroup each week, and so continue to build relationships with them that might go beyond playgroup to other aspects of life 'at the Roundabout'. Mainly Music and Story Sunday have recently gained families from playgroup, as Messy Church and the Community Program continue to do also. Families also support the Friday Meals program and the Garage sale, among other BUC activities.

Parents have recently shown more willingness to volunteer to read stories, lead the singing, set up the rooms and prepare craft materials for the packs from our craft 'library'. A core factor in this increasing participation is the relationships we have established with them and their increasing ownership of the playgroup as their community. They continue to express their appreciation of the quality of the program, the time volunteered by BUC people and the care and friendship extended to them by our volunteers.

We thank all those at BUC who help with hospitality, setting up & cleaning up, pastoral care and building relationships with the families. You are essential to the success of this ministry. One of the great benefits of this program is that the children and their families feel at home in the church and have made meaningful connections with the people here which we hope to build on well into the future. On a personal note, on the night I returned from holidays recently, I bumped into a playgroup family in Woolworths, and their three-year old was so excited to see me he danced a jig! What a home-coming!

Marnie Agnew for the Playgroup team

Mainly Music

The mainly music group was begun because there was a need expressed by one church family for such a group and as a further step in involving Playgroup families and others in exploring the possibility of God. The Church Council agreed to fund the initial outlay of \$300 to join and also endorsed the project as part of the wider vision to connect with our community as suggested by Carolyn Kitto in the 2012 discernment of our future.

The team was gathered and the leaders, Bev Eccleston and Carys Penny, were committed to the values and philosophy of mainly music which is a worldwide organization begun 20 years ago. The support of the church leaders is essential for this program to achieve its aims.

We have completed one term and have approx 20 families involved with an average attendance of 14 families and 21 children each week. We hope to reach an enrolment of 25 families by the end of the year but the number we have now makes a very satisfactory group without crowding.

We are learning together as our team of regular helpers and volunteers understand each other's skills and depend on each other with confidence. There are 25 people working in various capacities to make mainly music operate smoothly. As our friendships grow with those who attend we hope to offer pastoral care in times of crisis. We would like to extend our interactions beyond the time of the session and show God's love in practical ways.

The values of mainly music are Generosity, Creativity, Connection, Celebration and Honour which we will endeavour to put into practice throughout the year.

Story Sundays

Story Sundays happen on the third Sunday of the month during term time. We have put together a program of stories that tie in with what is happening at Messy Church the previous fortnight, so that older children and their parents can explore the stories in greater detail and have time to reflect and ask questions, explore the stories in a way that isn't possible or appropriate at Messy Church.

We have a team of 7 who between us tell the stories, welcome the families, help with the craft activities, provide hospitality and chat with the adults. We have another group of 5-6 interested people who are our prayer support team. In April I was supported by the Helen Lee Trust to attend the annual Godly Play National conference in Melbourne, which was a wonderful occasion, of fellowship, networking, learning, consolidation and being inspired with new ideas.

The highlight of this year was our Easter Story Sunday. We had 5 families, 12 children (about as many as we can manage at the moment!) aged 4-10 – the core from Messy Church, one new family from playgroup and a new family invited by their friends who are a regular Messy Church family. Christa and I told the story with the aid of a series of pictures, and the level of engagement of the children was a joy to behold, and their responses and questions both enthusiastic and insightful, profound even. During work time, one of the children made a paper plate face with features all made from glitter.

When asked, she said, “This is the face of God” – a great depiction of God, beautifully colourful and glittery!

Story Sunday is for the whole family, and we underpin what we are doing with hospitality and relationship-building. Part of the hospitality team’s brief is to open up opportunities for conversations with the adults, and to build relationships that may help them find their own place within the church. Anyone who would like to come and see, or join the team, would be most welcome. We don’t aim to make this a huge program, it works best with smaller numbers, so it will be interesting to see where it leads us.

Carys Penny

Community Program

The Program started 2013 smoothly and continues to do so like the well oiled machine it is. Having run for so many years, I find that as the Coordinator it requires more of gentle tinker rather than a strong steer in the right direction at this point. This has served as a blessing this year with my assortment of health issues arising since January and I am thankful to all those who have stepped up during my absences and kept things ticking along nicely.

This year has seen new classes of Pilates, Art for Beginners and Stick Creations start which is great and the regular classes are continuing as strong as before. We have seen new people join classes and sadly one class has discontinued. Thursday afternoons are quiet now so we’d love to see and hear the busy hum of classes during this time again.

In addition to the regular events and of course, the Roundabout Craft Fair later this year, the main focus for 2013 is actually planning for next year – the 40 year anniversary of the Community Program. This is something fantastic to celebrate and I hope to have numerous opportunities throughout 2014 to commemorate this wonderful occasion for BUC and the local community.

Otherwise, the usual planning activities continue with a few extra events this year with the hope to host a Christmas in July style end-of-term lunch celebration and asking class members to bring along items to donate to Beacon. We would also like to host a “Knit-In” day during the school holidays to make squares for Wrap with Love and provide a general social event for anyone interested from the BUC Congregation, Community Program, other user groups and the general public.

Riki Owens-Bennett

6.3 Website

Our Blackwood Uniting Church community is known for reaching out to our wider community through all its various programs. The [BUC website](#) continues to try to assist this wider outreach hoping to attract more people, but also to provide a one-stop-shop of interactive information for our own church community.

We have a great team who each play a part in updating material on the website and more joining all the time. At the time of writing, we are looking forward to two training sessions being conducted by Al Brockelhurst, of the UC Congregational Websites team, and hosted here at Blackwood on May 14th and 21st. These sessions are geared to both introduction and intermediate skills for working with WordPress – the easy management system our website runs on. Apart from approximately 14 people from Blackwood, we are looking forward to meeting website team members from across the Uniting Church SA world.

Our newest pages are all part of the [Family Ministry](#) activities and are usually among the most visited pages on our website along with the [Community Program](#) pages. These pages will be developed as the program itself grows.

There is room for 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 means 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 with Karen Collins via buc.website@gmail.com.

6.4 Mission & Justice

The special days are taken from the UCASA Synod's calendar for 2013. We have chosen those days which the group feels are particularly important. We are aiming to have one of the members of the group as worship leader for these days. We also aim to organise something for the table and around the church, relevant to each Sunday. Depending upon what we are able to do, and the involvement of others, we may need to be flexible with some dates.

- Reconciliation Sunday 26 May

Mark Waters, manager of Reconciliation South Australia, is coming to BUC on Sunday 19 May, to speak to both congregations.

- Environment Sunday 2 June

Anne will be organising something for this.

- NAIDOC Week 7-14 July

We are thinking about a forum. Mark Waters may provide some advice and / or assistance.

- Refugee and Migrant Sunday 25 August

We are hoping to involve the Blackwood Circle of Friends in this service.

- Social Justice Sunday 29 September – Anne Magarey

- Christmas Bowl – Malcolm McArthur

6.5 Urban Mission Network

Please follow the goings on through our website which is updated with every new newsletter. <http://www.urbannetwork.org.au/>

Our next gathering is an Expo held here at Blackwood Uniting Church on June 13th 6pm for a 6.30pm start.

It will be highlighting the Richness and Diversity of the resources in the Agencies and Centres of our Synod and Presbytery. Please RSVP to Christine Seacombe at 8332 8339 by the morning of Tuesday June 11th for catering purposes.

Wendy Norris

6.6 Kid's Hope

This year we have 12 men working at the Blackwood Primary School mentoring students as part of the Kids Hope Programme from Blackwood Uniting Church. There are a further 6 people having a rest for the year.

The mentors are working across a range of ages within several classes. Each operating differently according to the needs and interests of the child, some constructing model engines others small cars or painting besides a bit of school work where this is helpful. The main goal is to develop a positive relationship with the children and support them to see their school experience as positive and interesting.

During the year we will be meeting with the parents of the students to gain and deepen the relationship with the child and their families.

The school is very supportive and grateful for the support we are giving their children and the Christian Support Worker is accommodating and supportive.

We are always on the lookout for more mentors so if you are willing and able to support a child by mentoring them for one hour a week for each of the terms (give or take holidays etc) I would appreciate your call.

Ian Penny

82784114

6.7 Conversations with Blackwood Church of Christ

In July 2012 meetings began between representatives of the Blackwood Church of Christ and Blackwood Uniting to explore ways in which both churches could work more closely together. Both churches have had a history of sharing in projects (eg Beacon Emergency Relief) and special services over many years and have much in common. Both churches were of the opinion that our discussions were not out of a sense of urgency to combine because of financial short falls or declining membership but more out of a sense that we could achieve more if we cooperated more closely together on a joint mission. After several meetings, the following proposal was accepted by both Congregations at meetings in November 2012.

A. Proposal

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, missional frameworks and theological synergy.

We seek to:

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

B. Achievements in 2012 and 2013

1. **During late 2012** there was some exploration of the possibilities of cooperating on 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

2. There has been some consultation over Youth and Mainly Music interests but not a lot of progress at this time. It is thought that members of both churches are flat out achieving their respective interests to engage fully at this time. The main cooperation has been in worship as we get to know each other. See the following:

3. Joint Events Achieved

- January 6th 2013 common worship at 9.15am on the Main Oval at the Belair Recreation Park led by a Church of Christ team as part of the January Environmental Services held by the Uniting Church in National Park. Those who preferred not to worship in the Park attended a traditional service at 11.00am in the Uniting Church at Blackwood.
- Joint Palm Sunday Service March 2013
- Ongoing Beacon Emergency Relief

3. Future Events planned

- Joint BBQ Lunch on Sunday 11 August 2013 at the Blackwood Community Centre.
- Joint activities for Advent in December 2013
- Joint activities for Palm Sunday, Easter and Pentecost in 2014
- Committee meetings will continue in 2013 to explore how our churches can;
 - bring resources together to strengthen our ministry in the community,
 - identify emerging community needs
 - and ways in which we might collaborate in addressing them.

4. On the 22nd June the group met with Ian Evans and Tim Hein (New Mitcham Councillor) with the following purposes

1. To inform our representatives of both State and Local Government of these discussions.
2. To explore future possibilities concerning further cooperation which may include moving to common facilities and the implications of that to the community.
3. To discuss opportunities to serve the local community that are consistent with the needs of local and state government.
4. To grasp any other implications which may not be clear to us at this time.

*At the time of writing the outcomes of this meeting were not known.

6.8 Memorandum of Understanding

Seeking in principle support of Blackwood Uniting Church congregation for supporting Flora Manswara via a Memorandum of Understanding.

The Blackwood Uniting Church (BUC) Journeying with the Church in West Papua group has been working on, amongst other things, a process for supporting Flora Manswara, a little girl with a deformity of her lower leg, whom members of BUC met on their visit to West Papua in Feb 2010.

Members of the Blackwood Uniting Church (BUC) Journeying with the Church in West Papua group have developed up an initial draft Memorandum of Understanding, which will be between GKI, with South Australian representative of UnitingWorld (International Mission Officers at Synod) and us, but GKI (the Church in West Papua) & SA Synod officer have not yet had a chance to see it.

We are seeking in principle agreement from BUC congregation, for the BUC Journeying with the Church in West Papua group to support Flora Manswara a girl we met on Numfor Island in Feb 2010 with a lower leg deformity, to have an improved quality of life. This is a long term (approximately 15 year) commitment, which we would like to do through a Memorandum Of Understanding with South Australian representative of UnitingWorld (International Mission Officers at Synod) and GKI (the Church in West Papua).

It will involve raising funds through the community and BUC. To ensure sound governance the 3 Parties will establish the Flora Manswara Management Program and BUC has already agreed to establish the Flora Manswara Trust Fund Deed, which was endorsed by BUC Council 17 April 2013.

It is a long agreement, but there is an option for BUC to opt out if that became necessary. The Flora Manswara Trust Fund Committee will aim to raise the anticipated total amount of funds within the first 3-5 years and then manage the money for the duration of the agreement.

We ask the BUC congregation to support the Memorandum Of Understanding in principle and entrust us (members of the Journeying with the church in West Papua group) in consultation with BUC Council, to complete the document in partnership with GKI and UnitingWorld. BUC have developed the first draft in discussion with Adam Trethaway. Our aim is for it to go to GKI as soon as possible. Adam is hoping to go to West Papua in July and it would be terrific if we were able to have sign off of the MOU at that time.

If you would like to read a copy of the draft Memorandum of Understanding, please contact Jane Bassham on 8270 8442 or email webjeb@live.com.au

Many thanks,

Jane Bassham