

Annual General Meeting

Blackwood Uniting Church
Sunday 12th November 2017



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

Congregational Meeting Agenda

Sunday, November 12th 2017

Blackwood Uniting Church

1. Welcome & Opening Prayer	Michael Bull	
2. Overview of meeting items	Michael Bull	
a. Reminder re:- Orange/Blue cards		
b. Record of Attendance		
c. Audio-recording of meeting for BUC website		
3. Approval of Minutes of Congregational meeting		
General Meeting 21 st May 2017		5
AGM 20 th November 2016		13
4. Matters Arising		
5. Spoken Reports		
5.1 Minister's Reports	Rev Phil Hoffmann	18
5.2 Church Council Report	Chris Bray	20
5.3 Finance & Budget 2017	Tony Miller	24
5.4 Reflection on spoken reports, general questions		
6. Family Ministry		
Consideration of recommendation from Council		
7. Tabled Reports		
7.1 Relief Minister	Rev Dr Adrian Brown	26
7.2 Community Classes	Jacqui Harrison	27
7.3 Property	Bob Lyon	29
7.4 Family Ministries	Marnie Agnew	31
7.5 Playgroup	Marnie Agnew	32
7.6 Mainly Music	Carys Penny	34
7.7 Messy Church	Marnie Agnew	35
7.8 Urban Mission Network	Rev Phil Hoffmann	36
7.9 MHICC	Rev Phil Hoffmann	40
7.10 Blackwood Reconciliation Group	Rev Phil Hoffmann	41
7.11 Library	Joy Belling	42
7.12 Blackwood Circle of Friends for Refugees	Tricia Rushton	43

8. Reflection on Tabled reports

9. Other Business

Craft Fair update from Jacqui Harrison, Community Program Coordinator
Resthaven Sing-along update from Anne Gear

10. Next Meeting – Sunday, 20th May 2018 (to be confirmed)

11. Closing Prayer

Rev Phil Hoffmann

3. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Congregational Meeting - Sunday 21 May 2017

Attendance: 70 as below –

Judy Adami, David Agnew, Marnie Agnew, Jane Bassham, Joy Belling, Bryan Belling, Helen Blake, Joy Boase, Mary Bown, Chris Bray, Wes Bray, Claudia Cliff, Robert Corbett, Josie Dennison, Tony Dyson, Bev Eccleston, Ann Grear, Russell Grear, Penny Harper, Jacqui Harrison, David Hawkins, Lynona Hawkins, Joan Hazeldine, Gwenyth Hewitt, John Hewitt, Rev Phil Hoffmann, Helen Janz, Jack King, Heather Lee, Tim Lee, Ashley Lower, Judy Lower, Bob Lyon, Doff Lyon, Gloria McArthur, Margaret McCaskell, Ann McLean, Geoff McLean, Tony Miller, Shannon Mitchell, Eunice Monks, Jim Murton, Nina Murton, Janet Paull, Carys Penny, Ian Penny, Meg Pentland, Ray Pentland, Rod Pike, Thelma Pike, Glenis Reid, Bob Roach, Christie Roach, Danny Roach, Jan Rawolle, Keith Rawolle, Angela Smith, Cathy Smith, Dave Smith, Alison Sutcliffe, Trevor Sutcliffe, Jan Turner, Milton Turner, Don Wheaton, Elaine Wheaton, Elizabeth Williams, Avis Whitbread, John Whitbread, Jan Wiseman, Merri Stodart.

Apologies: 19 as below-

Deb Agnew, Graham Brown, Helen Brown, Michael Bull, Karen Collins, Liz Collins, Nancy Cranwell, Peter Cranwell, Ann Dixon, John Dixon, Bec English, Anthony Furness, Jan Furness, Ann Magarey, Brian Pickering, Larry Pickering, Peter Stead, Mark Williams.

Chairman Ewan Hazeldine welcomed everyone present in absence of Michael Bull and commenced meeting with prayer at 11.25 am

Loving God as we come together may we be aware that you go before us, you are already here calling us to your mission in this place. May we have ears to hear you and wisdom to discern. May we engage together gently and thoughtfully, taking good care of our words. We ask you to be in our deliberations and to guide us in our journey as a community, as pilgrim people seeking to be faithful to your will in all we do. Amen

Ewan requested those present to record their attendance and any apologies they are aware of. The use of the orange & blue Cards on each table was explained.

Review of minutes:

Ewan explained this is not a decision making meeting but an information sharing meeting with focus today on Family Ministry. There was a slight change in order as updated in the Agenda.

Minutes of the AGM in November 2016 will be accepted at next AGM Meeting in November 2017. The minutes were provided for information. Rev Hoffman highlighted what happened at the last meeting. The main item in those minutes was the focus on Family Ministry. Our previous Family Ministry worker had finished and we needed to make a decision on what the ongoing arrangements would be. The work that had been done since last meeting on that need would be focussed on as a priority today.

Reports:

Chris Bray – Chair Church Council

Chris acknowledged the other Council Members: Marnie Agnew, Bec English, Phil Hoffmann, Ashley Lower, Bob Lyon, Tony Miller, Ian Penny, Adrian Brown, Anne Magarey

Church Council acts as executive to this wider congregation, with an operational overview of the various community groups and individuals but also doing the dreaming and imaginings and discuss how we could do things better or differently. Council has been focusing on Finance, and Signage, maintenance of the property, welcoming and welcoming spaces, overview of worship and most importantly at the moment, the Family Ministry.

Importance of Family Ministry has been affirmed. From previous experience it is important to find the right fit, have the right job description and the right role in place. There was a need to have a review and it was decided to invite Rev Coral (Cogs) Smith to do this.

It was felt Rev Smith had been away long enough from our congregation to do a review as an outsider, but with the trust, respect and knowledge of both the worshipping community and the Family Ministry's community to provide that oversight and insight. The Council looks forward to hearing Cog's initial thoughts and draft recommendation and then working together as a community with the families and the worshipers with the wider community to manage, implement and support Family Ministry in Blackwood.

Ewan thanked Chris for her report and invited questions or comments. Minutes of Council meetings are available in the green folder in the foyer. Ewan then welcomed Cogs to present her interim report and thanked Cogs for the prepared summary of her presentation, as found on tables at the meeting.

Family Ministry Review (Interim) – Rev Cogs Smith

Cogs thanked everyone for the invitation to come back after two years and expressed her joy at seeing what is happening with Play Group, Messy Church, and Mainly Music.

Cogs noted that today it is an introductory report with a full report going to Church Council in a couple of weeks to present further details of what was in the 64 responses received, some verbal, some surveys, some from families and a lot from the congregation.

Cogs noted that Rev Phil had recently likened Blackwood Uniting to a train, and Cogs viewed various carriages as the Community Program, the volunteers, Messy Church, 9.15 Service Children's Corner, and Creche on community days. Family Ministry could be one carriage. Cogs asked how would we feel if that carriage was lost – these feelings would reflect our connection and commitment to Family Ministry.

Cogs had 37 written responses and 27 informal chats with people. Her report was guided by her working definition of the goals/purpose of the Family Ministry - "to develop connections and relationships with families, of all shapes and sizes, and building social capital within the Blackwood Community for the sake of the Gospel and gospel values".

Current strategies have been to run the active programs of Mainly Music, Playgroup and Messy Church. There is also the walking programs, Community Program Creche and 9.15 Sunday Children's Corner and in any week there are families four times a week in the building.

Playgroup has been around for 8 years and Messy Church and Mainly Music for about 5 years. Cogs referred to the Carolyn Kitto Review of 5 years ago and the main point of that was encouraging us to become involved with various forms of Family Ministry. There are families that have been coming to family activities for three or four years, particularly in Messy Church.

Family Ministry has always had something of a grass roots appeal and Cogs noted that Assets Based Community Development (ABCD) theory proposes “that community groups work well when they build on their strengths and work together with what they have, their assets”. That is what Blackwood Uniting Church has been doing in Family Ministry, and that is why the programs have been successful.

Family Ministries need three things:

1. Families
2. The original congregation but hopefully over time as we continue to develop relationships with these families we will be a renewed congregation.
3. The “logistics” (practical things like call, gift, skills, staff, space, needs and practical stuff)

Family Ministry has come out of needs of families and also needs of Blackwood Uniting Church to be in connection through relationships with families.

One of the interesting things is looking at the programs it runs:

The Community Program has had a Creche for many years and usually has a about 7 children

Sunday Morning 9.15 Children’s Corner usually has up to 12 children of varying ages on any given Sunday and has grown significantly in recent times particularly on Easter Sunday when there were 14.

Monday Play Group has up to 29 children attending and on talking to the leaders they speak about sharing Christian values and hospitality, building social capital and telling Easter and Christmas stories. In spite of other playgroups opening in the Blackwood area, BUC’s is well-loved by families and is a very successful program. It has maintained solid numbers and volunteers have said that it has enabled them to have good relationships with the children.

Mainly Music is also weekly with its singing program of 12 songs, including 3 God songs, and also shares Christian values and hospitality, building social capital and telling faith stories. It sends simple messages of God’s love and hope. Its child free morning tea is a space well appreciated by parents who stay there. It is another well-loved program.

Messy Church has a format of craft, worship and story time at 5.00 pm is followed by a share meal and again appreciated by the families. It started out as a time for young families but over the years has started to age and again is a very well loved program by those who attend and very successful.

Cogs noted that overall the responses from the families, the children, mums, dad, grandparents and carers were very affirming about the quality of the programs provided by Blackwood Uniting Church. Everyone thought the total Family Ministry Team were excellent. This is something to hold onto as parents are by and large very keen to go to these programs when their circumstances allow. The families could not think of anything more to be provided; Cogs believed this was because they were too busy to generate new ideas. So it is important for the Church to think of things and “give them a go” keeping in mind the families’ busy lifestyles. Time is important to them and some families find it such a great time for Messy Church on Sunday afternoon after they have sport on Sunday mornings.

The results of the review were very positive and something to be celebrated by the congregation as Blackwood Uniting Church runs the best of programs even when compared to other programs that the families that attend. It is important to acknowledge that these programs are successful in many ways that many Churches would envy.

Concerns however were raised by such issues as sustainability, the need for a Family Worker, how we are looking for other volunteers and what else we should be doing for families. These ministries depend heavily on a lot of input from a small number of volunteers and Cogs commended Marnie Agnew and Carys Penny and their teams for the work they do on behalf of the Church. Interestingly the other name that came up from families was Rev Phil Hoffman and his ability to tell stories and what he adds to the worship time at Messy Church.

Cogs highlighted two key issues:

1. Limited human resources – Cogs used the metaphor of an apple pie; you have visitors for tea and you have one apple pie. If you have 16 visitors, people will have a very small piece of pie; if you have 4 visitors then you cut it into quarters. That is a bit like Human Resources of the Church, if you add a Family Worker there are limited resources and there needs to be a lot of imagination as to how we use our resources and how we value them.
2. Culture change - The Family Ministry is culture changing. We are changing the cultures of families inviting them to church things that they may not have been involved in. At the moment we have almost a service model where they pay their \$5 and go to Messy Church. How can Blackwood Uniting Church invite them into a more partnership model or a relationship model? How do we create partnerships or perhaps other organisations that support families, that can be added into the mix? It is a slightly different way of thinking from what the Church has been involved in. If this Family Ministry is ongoing and we get more young families to church, how prepared is BUC as a congregation to create that welcoming faith and continue to create it to deal with that change in culture?

BUC is a large Uniting Church with financial resources and good people who have education, skills and capabilities, and it has established good long term relationships with several families. It is a congregation with many members who think Family Ministry is important and all of this is a good thing in the changing landscape in which BUC exists.

The recommendations and suggestions to Council are:

1. Blackwood Uniting Church develops its own definition of goals or purpose and Family Ministry along with the concept of Family Ministry being a long-term strategy of Blackwood Uniting Church's congregational life, that is owned and appreciated by Blackwood Uniting Church.
2. Blackwood Uniting Church can keep on doing what it is doing and give thanks for as long as it remains a life giving blessing for those family and volunteers involved.

3. Form deeper partnerships with families so that over time it becomes increasingly inclusive and the families can continue to develop a high level of ownership. How do we respectfully encourage good relationships within working and practical partnerships, as well as the existing “service model?”
4. Maintain the 11.00 Traditional Service for those who like a Traditional Service, 9.15 Family Friendly & Contemporary, and consider Messy Church for all Age as Blackwood Uniting Church’s third worship service, for everyone who likes an informal worship time and a shared meal. At Messy Church encourage an offering to help sustain the congregation as well as the existing donation for food.
5. Continue to improve the Sunday morning experience – 9.15 worship continues to develop being a family friendly and family relevant service with an engaging Children’s Corner with two areas – one for older and younger children. Worship leaders are encouraged to continue including a kid’s spot/children’s talk in the worship planning and possibly find other ways to engage them, working with the Children’s Corner volunteers.
6. Consider restructuring the existing Family Ministry with only one 0-5 year program in order to create more energy for other programs. Explore the possibility of creatively combining the best of Playgroup and Mainly Music, so there maybe energy and skills to develop other programs. Or possibly running the same program twice a week to cater for parents who can only come on specific days. i.e. (set up Friday & repeat on Monday)
7. Other strategic program ideas – There are other suggestions in the survey for things that Blackwood Uniting Church and families could be involved in together i.e. Friday Family Nights, Kids club for 7-12 year olds, more “Messy Events”, Family Weekend Walking Group, picnics or other outdoor activities, developing small groups - Home/Study/Bible/Parenting/Coffee/Picnic/cluster groups
8. Keep looking for a Family Worker and be clear about what you want, someone who can see the vision of Blackwood Uniting Church and relate well to families and is good at practical stuff.
9. Keep looking for God’s dreams and visions, never stop believing that God is inviting Blackwood Uniting Church into the future, for the sake of offering the possibility of God. Hold onto your vision as it is one of the things that keeps the train going.

Ewan thanked Cogs for her presentation and asked those present to now reflect on the presentation. Following reflection Ewan invited questions and comments but reminded everyone this is a work in progress and encouraged anyone to meet with Cogs if they wished to raise anything else.

Bev Eccleston questioned several issues from point 6 and Cogs responded that it was really too big to comment on as too soon. Cogs mentioned there were some issues raised, the practicalities, particularly of Mainly Music and there is some discussion on the programs and what they do in the bigger report.

Ian Penny questioned whether the volunteers were wearing out and should they be asked if they wished to continue. Cogs raised as a concern in the interviews on the discussion of programs and should there be a second review of what volunteers thought.

Tony Miller asked whether Cogs was able to elicit why families came here rather than elsewhere. Cogs mentioned it was the best run program, best organised, best activities, quality of people, good people, kind, and good quality of programmes with coffee and tea served. One person thanked the Church for running this and another said “This is fantastically run”. They did see the Christian caring behind all the programs.

Angela Smith questioned, rather than a long term worker, maybe we need to look at a short term person to come in for specific areas with expertise i.e. parenting course.

Neville Pope mentioned the need to work together to encourage people to be involved. How do we invite people to be involved in the various programs (ownership)? Cogs expressed ownership as part of families and as part of the Church. We can always own it as in prayers, offering to support family worship. Offering is a part of your commitment to God.

David Agnew addressed the physical energy needed for people having to set up and may need to find some way to get people involved in setting up. How are we going to manage the stamina of the workers?

Ewan asked for a show of Orange cards in recognition of Cogs report and mentioned that Cogs was happy to hear from anyone over the next week before she finalises her report for Council. The report was supported unanimously.

Tony Miller – Finance Report

Interim Report

1. Close to balance budget to end of April 2017

- Year to date surplus of \$502.
- We have spent \$83,000 and we have raised \$83,000
- Offerings are on budget as expected
- Total cash balance at end of April is about \$150,000

2. New activities

Expect to be close to a balanced budget this year but this was based on things going along as they have been at the moment and does not include the new activities such as Family Ministry, new external signage and some questions about redesigning of the worship space and other issues too. These are all over and above our usual activities.

We have a fair reserve and that could finance some of these activities for a short period of time but if the congregation resolves that the Family Ministry is an important issue for us and we decide that we want to put more money into it that does have to be funded on an ongoing basis by us getting more income.

New programs could raise a challenge for budget in the future which the community may have to respond to.

Jacqui Harrison – Community Programs.

Highlights –

1st continuing Learning program this year –

Term I with Peter Brinkworth, Claudia Cliff and Alex Kelly and was well attended.

Term II starts soon

Fundraisers:

Term 1 - Pancake Day which was actually Hot Cross Bun day and raised \$200 for Uniting Care

End of Term 1 - Leukaemia Foundation, in honour of one of our community class participants that we lost from the disease. To honour her memory we held a morning tea. Jacqui read a beautiful card of thanks from the daughter of the late participant who also came to the classes and the Morning Tea.

Quote from Card: "Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today and creates the vision for tomorrow."

Combined several classes - Knitting and Crochet, Needlework and Embroidery, therefore only paying one tutor. New students in Teddy Bears, Decorative Painting, Scrap Booking and four new students in Mai Jong. The most popular class is Art where Doug Thompson does a wonderful job and has put on another class on Thursday afternoon for those who have completed the Art for Beginners class the year before. Patchwork and quilting always does very well and the Needlework and Embroidery is also very popular.

The Community and Management Committee unanimously decided to raise the tutors pays from \$15h to \$20h to recognise and give incentive for them to keep coming back year after year. Tutors' pay has not gone up for years and our bank account is looking very healthy at the moment. Bank account is currently \$27,000 and was \$30,000 at the beginning of the year, which we believe is the most it has been for ten years.

The success of Craft Fair last year was noted, having changed the model to be held on the one day, and we will do the same this year on Saturday 4 November 2017.

Thanks to Volunteers and to celebrate Volunteers Day last week Jacqui gave them all a card and a gift. They are very much appreciated as they make Jacqui's day so enjoyable. "I love coming to work when you are here and ditto to Phil for answering the telephone, giving change and photocopying."

Ewan thanked Jacqui and expressed how lucky we are to have her in this role.

Any other business:

Russell Grear – Report on ceiling in foyer.

Two weeks ago a storm caused considerable mess in foyer and two inner offices. Uniting Church Insurance Company sent builders and carpet cleaners to make the place safe. Uniting Church Insurance office is happy to pick up cost except for the \$500 excess but question is now when is it going to be fixed and we hope it will be fixed in the next two weeks.

The meeting acknowledged Bob Lyon & Management Property Committee for their work

Bev Eccleston requested support of Phil in his role of Chair of the Inter Hills Ministry Council as Phil does not have any other support from Clergy. Phil is restructuring so there are not so many meetings but would encourage others to come and support him. Concerned that other churches have not encouraged their pastors to come.

The meeting expressed a vote of thanks to Gloria McArthur retiring in her role on Inter Church Council and Beacon.

Ewan closed the meeting at 12.30 and thanked Jacqui for her help behind the scenes in preparing the papers for the meeting.

Next Meeting – Annual General Meeting 12 November 2017.

Phil commented what keeps him going in this community is “not what I do but when I see what you do”. Phil closed the meeting with Prayer.

June Field
Secretary to the Congregation

Congregational Meeting Sunday 20 November 2016

Attendance: 66 as below -

Judy Adami, David Agnew, Marnie Agnew, Ros Bardsley, Ken Bardsley, Helen Blake, Mary Bown, Ray Bown, Chris Bray, Adrian Brown, Helen Brown, Graham Brown, Mary Brumpton, Ron Brumpton, Michael Bull, Peter Cranwell, Tony Dyson, Rebecca English, June Field, Jean Finlayson, Anthony Furness, Jan Furness, Karen Granger (Hoffmann), Penny Harper, Jacqui Harrison, David Hawkins, Lynona Hawkins, Gwenyth Hewitt, John Hewitt, Phil Hoffmann, Jack King, Judy Lower, Doff Lyon, Bob Lyon, Anne Magarey, Jane Marlow, Phil Marlow, Margaret McCaskill, Tony Miller, Phyl Mitchell, Lyn Muller, Carys Penny, Ian Penny, Meg Pentland, Ray Pentland, Brian Pickering, Thelma Pike, Jill Pope, Neville Pope, Jan Rawolle, Keith Rawolle, Glenis Reid, Bob Roach, Christine Roach, Danny Roach, Keith Rodda, Beth Shepherd, John Shepherd, Dave Smith, Peter Stead, Richard Stead, Jan Turner, Milton Turner, Betty West, Avis Whitbread, John Whitbread,

Apologies: 20 as below-

Deb Agnew, Wes Bray, Liz Collins, Nancy Cranwell, Morgan English, Barbara Goldsmith, Danny Goldsmith, Jen Herman, Ewan Hazeldine, Joan Hazeldine, Heather Lee, Tim Lee, Ros Miller, Jean Potter, Rob Potter, Merri Stoddard, Alison Sutcliffe, Trevor Sutcliffe, Elisabeth Williams, Mark Williams

Chairman Michael Bull welcomed everyone present and outlined there would be two spoken reports and an opportunity for discussion at tables to some of the questions.

Michael opened the meeting with a prayer at 11.25 am:

Loving God, we come together today asking for your guidance, wisdom, and support as we meet as a congregation. Help us to engage in meaningful discussion; allow us to grow closer as a group and nurture the bonds of community. And may we remain mindful that in all that we do here today, all that we accomplish, we seek to carry out your will for us as a congregation. We ask these things in your name, Amen.

Welcome: Chairman Michael Bull welcomed June Field as the new Secretary for Congregational Meetings and acknowledged and thanked Dave Smith for his past 3 years of service as Congregational Secretary.

Overview of Meeting items: 2 spoken reports from Phil Hoffmann and Tony Miller and then there will be an opportunity to ask questions or make comments on the other written reports circulated. Michael thanked Jacqui Harrison for getting the reports together last week and circulating them to give everyone a chance to read through prior to the meeting.

Reports to be tabled for discussion from the groups and the Orange and Blue cards on each table to be used to express agreement or non-agreement in keeping with consensus for the Uniting Church. Orange cards are for agreement and Blue cards are for disagreements.

Sign-up sheets: Michael requested those present to record their attendance on the sheets at the Tables and to please record the names of anyone whom they are aware is an apology.

The meeting will be recorded for the website and there will be facilities for editing later should anyone not want something recorded.

Approval of minutes: Two documents circulated with two sets of minutes.

Minutes from Annual General Meeting, Sunday 15 November 2015 and Annual General Meeting, Sunday 15 May 2016 to be formally accepted.

There being no questions, agreement of the two minutes was expressed with a show of the Orange Cards.

Jacqui Harrison reported that the Craft Fair held Saturday 19th October raised \$8,600 with 600 people coming through the door. Jacqui thanked the community for their participation in so many ways to help make this event such a success.

Michael thanked Jacqui for her contribution in planning, organising, generating ideas and making decisions on how things were to be done to make it such a successful day. Michael requested the Congregation raise the Orange cards as a unanimous vote of thanks.

Minister's Report:

Phil Hoffman then spoke on his Minister's report. Phil recapped his report and outlined the Primary purposes and Secondary purposes of the Church.

Primary ones touched on were:

Community, Faith, and Care of one another

Phil spoke that sometimes as a Church we get caught up as the secondary ones. All our programs and activities are the secondary activities of the Church and for a long time the Church generally has a focus on secondary activities and overlooks that we only do these as another purpose for the connection, community and the care.

Phil reflected on the Church and where it is and where it might be in the future and expressed the future is actually focussing us. People have busy lives and because of that these people long for the Primary purposes that the Church can offer and do not have a lot of space for the secondary ones.

Hallmarks of future will be authenticity and giving people help with their lives and reminded the congregation of philosopher Alain de Botton who he had previously quoted.

"Life is hard, it is not easy out there and how much help do we give people to live their lives".

Phil expressed that this must be one of our primary offerings to help people live their lives.

The importance of sharing of bread and hospitality.

What are we here for? Why are so many others not here?

Phil shared his three reasons that they do not know we are speaking of:

Self-Reflection

Faith development

Community Care

People do not know what we are on about or they do not need it in the form. There is a communication gap and often the Church is at fault for the communication gap - have we communicated effectively what we are really on about?

Secondly, they do not really know what we are on about.

The challenge is to find other forms and it has become clearer to Phil that these may be a shared meal, bread broken together and giving help with their lives and authentic caring relationships are the hallmarks.

Alain de Botton is a reformed atheist who does not want to argue with the Christians, but is one who respects what Christians are on about and wants to begin a Church as an atheist as he sees the value of Shared Bread and giving help with lives.

Phil expressed the difficulty in summarizing his year in the life of a Church in a two-page report.

His highlight in ministry is when he sees people of God extending a simple gesture of care and support like driving someone home or to hospital appointments. Phil expressed the buzz he receives on hearing the news of care of others from people within the community. He believes his job is to foster a culture where those things happen and in this community that does happen.

Requested Congregation need to reflect on pastoral care and outreach in this meeting.

It is time for review of our Family ministries, play group messy church and mainly music that have continued under the direction and dedication of wonderful volunteers for which we are very grateful.

Employment of a Pastor to give attention and oversight and to develop Family Ministries did not work out as hoped but the faithful people in our community have enabled these ministries to continue. We now need to decide what sort of person we need to find to enable these ministries to continue. This aspect needs clarification and thought as it is difficult to find the right person.

Is it to guarantee our future like people getting excited about a baby born in our community this week? Church needs to value what we have in the here and now. Why are we so keen to find a new Family Ministries volunteer? This is an aspect of our community life that needs some clarification and thought.

How do we express and embrace the things identified above and make sure they continue to happen. Messy Church and Mainly Music are their own little communities and whatever happens has to happen in those communities.

Phil wrote a heading in his Report known as Governance (the organisational structure) which is a challenge for Churches these days.

We are gifted with people in the community that serve in these roles on Council and current people are:

Chris Bray as Chairperson who makes sure these things happen

Adrian Brown as Deputy when Chris is not available

Bec English as Minute taker is very detailed

Tony Miller as the leader of the Finance Team

Phil acknowledged and thanked everyone including Ian Penny, Ashley Lower, Bob Lyon, and Ann Magarey who have dedicated themselves to the task of Church Council.

Phil expressed we could do with another person in that capacity.

Blackwood for a long time has committees of Worship, Justice, Property, Finance and Pastoral Care.

Property and Finance maintain a healthy life of their own and their task is well met but it is obvious it is difficult to find people who have time to attend meetings particularly at night.

People commit to specific passions to make sure things happen without relying on a committee

As Minister, Phil would like to review the function of Elders and when and how they meet in the New Year.

Important that people identify who takes this role of Elder in the Community.

Community Classes go from strength to strength and Phil acknowledged the initiative of Jacqui Harrison and her creativity to make these all happen and expressed that she is a gift to the community. Jacqui had been working on this for a whole year, thinking of ideas and revamping the whole concept. Jacqui loves a challenge and always gives me an answer to an impossible idea.

Phil expressed he will take his part in this community but has a realisation that he cannot do it all and is not going to try anymore.

Phil referred to Mark 14: Verse 8 -

“She hath done that which she could”

Phil expressed he has never been in a better place in Ministry and is healthier, happier in his task and loving Ministry amongst the congregation and developing a clearer role in what he is meant to do and it means shaping the unknown future.

Phil quoted Julian of Norwich from Spirituality Sessions -

“All shall be well, all manner of things shall go well”.

Christine Roach expressed thanks to Phil for the incredible care shown while she was in hospital and of the care to her family at the time.

Michael asked for any questions re Phil’s report and requested a show of cards for acceptance of Phil’s report. The report was unanimously accepted.

Michael expressed the joy he felt on reading Phil’s report and heartened but not surprised reading the words from Phil that he has never felt happier and healthier in Ministry at Blackwood.

Finance Report:

See Tabled report from Tony Miller Chair of Finance group.

Tony comment on the success of Craft Fair and reviewed the situation for 2016 with a projected end of year deficit of \$1,058 - less than the budget forecast of \$2,190 – See Tabled Report.

Major variances from 2016 budget were due mainly to mini Garage Sale, reduced Family Ministry costs and successful Craft Fair – See Tabled Report

The increased costs have been due to additional Ministry and Office Staff costs, increase in Synod levy and hire of Church facilities less than budget.

This year Finance and Council decided to present the accounts of the Church in a slightly different way to make things clearer to the general congregation. See Tabled Report for more details

Tony requested any questions and then outlined the features of 2017 Budget. See Tabled Report for more details.

The 2017 budget shows a net deficit of \$13,610 almost entirely due to provision for a Family Ministry co-ordinator.

Council discussed these issues and believe at the last review 3 or 4 years ago the community expressed strong commitment to Family Ministry, so to respect that point of view this has been retained in the budget. This deficit can be absorbed for one year and maybe two but Council propose to make provision this year and then undertake a review as to what is the most appropriate way for to build community with young families.

See Tabled Report for summary of Budget for 2017

Tony requested Congregation approve Church Council recommendations as per the Tabled report and asked for any questions or comments from the congregation.

Carys Penny commented on the position of the Family Ministry worker and requested congregation think about giving \$5 more per week to cover the income of the Family Ministry worker to enable growth.

Tony thanked Carys for her comments and agreed that if our income grows it would no longer be a deficit.

Michael thanked Tony and requested acceptance for 2017:

- 1 - to budget provision of 10 hours per week for Family Ministry Co-ordinator
- 2 - review on outreach mission in relation to families.

There was unanimous acceptance of both and Michael thanked Tony for the detailed report and the conscientious way he was maintaining stewardship of the Church funds.

Ian Penny spoke to request congregation search their hearts to give more so we have a bigger income and our budget can be healthy.

Tabled Reports

Michael outlined all the Tabled reports and requested questions or comments from congregations on these reports and expressed the sense of breadth and depth of what is happening within the Church.

Acceptance of Tabled Reports was expressed by the meeting.

Michael outlined the purpose of the work sheets circulated to tables and time to talk together requesting a rating on 1- 10 in categories of Worship, Pastoral Care, Outreach. Everyone was encouraged to discuss these 3 areas, what are your views, what is going well, how can we improve, are there any new ideas in relation to those categories or in relation to future directions.

Tables were divided into groups to cover a different theme for 25 minutes and encouraged everyone to capture key points to be handed in at the end but to have an open, frank discussion.

Michael requested sheets be placed at the front and thanked everyone involved in setting up for the meeting and preparing spoken and tabled reports. A reminder was given to everyone of the combined service with the Church of Christ next week and encouraged everyone to bring a plate to share.

Next Meeting – Sunday 21 May 2017.

With prayer from Phil, the meeting was closed at 12:30

June Field

Secretary to the Congregation

5.1 Minister's Report to the Congregational Meeting

2017 draws to its completion with myself in the role of Acting Chaplain at Westminster School. I am a whole-hearted supporter of the school and what it provides, not just in education, but in the formation of well-rounded young adults ready to meet the world and make their contribution. I am a fourteen (14) year member of School Council as the Uniting Church 'presence' and Moderator's representative. Whilst it is life-giving to work with such youthful potential and energy, being Senior School Chaplain has pushed me beyond comfort zones, having to face myself in new areas. But the wider Uniting Church saw it as a crucial need in time and I am grateful for Blackwood's willingness to release me to the position.

Back 'home', the Community of Blackwood Uniting Church the figures tell the story: if we are committed to family ministry and believe in it, then to find a paid Family Ministries Worker to support and develop this important facet of our life together, it will need to be with considerable fund-raising. Worthy of note too is that we haven't had a Family Ministries worker in place for over a year now and the family ministries all survive and continue (though perhaps at cost to the Minister and faithful volunteers).

As Church Council has waded through long hours of discussion of this area of our community life, I have often wondered personally: *"Are we being creative enough in facing the future?"* Because of what it has meant to us, there is often an emotional attachment to repeating what we have known in the past. Subsidiary questions might be: Do we have to be 'all things to all people', including to families? Does every church need to have Family Ministries? I think there is something quite intuitive in churches' understandings about family ministries somehow being a guarantee of the future life of the church.

Given these, can we be a viable, effective and worthwhile faith community without all the programs of family ministries we currently run [Playgroup, "Messy Church" and "Mainly Music"]? The answer to that might be, what else is important? And are we doing it? Part of me reflects that maybe it doesn't matter how committed to family ministries Blackwood Uniting is if the community aren't committed to them. A key challenge might be not whether or not we run or provide family ministries, but in what expression; that is, how we do this. Paternalistic programs provided 'for' rather than with seem not to hold the promise they once did. My vision for Family Ministries would be of a 'community' reflection over a meal, highlighting and giving opportunity for family practice of spirituality [not a program just for children with the parents' responsibility and involvement being to get them here]. This suggests initiatives in worship, rather than in programs.

I ask too about other options for worthwhile ministry into the future. When I reflect on the highlights of Blackwood Uniting Church's life in the past year, I think of:

- The continuing provision of community, which happens in and through our worship Sunday-by-Sunday and through our many other activities. Under Jacqui's excellent leadership, energy and friendship, Community Classes every Wednesday and Thursday are their own 'communities' – shared lives, care and concern. Indeed, where our family ministries have been at their best is when they enable community between participants.
[and, to note, Community Classes provide their own family ministry – a Creche which has its own children week-by-week!]
- The *"Occasional Series in Spirituality"* which has drawn a regular and committed group of about 50 people, gathered around practices which I consider to be 'core business', that is, spirituality, and invited people deeper into their own journey of faith
- The second term of 'Continuing Learning' took a brave look at issues surrounding aging and dying and in my view, provided some very relevant and targeted help to people around the issues. Potential exists to develop and extend this as a community service.

'Church' as we have known it is changing. Programs are not the 'call' of our day. The notion of generational progression from some form of 'kid's program' into youth group and then an adult faith just doesn't seem to hold in the contemporary world. Not all that we once did still occurs or can occur. Is God saying something by what happens? By the journey we are on together? It might be different, but can God be other than what unfolds in our life and community of faith?

At a personal level, this past year has borne its own significant events for us as a family: Lewis' spinal surgery on June 7 after a period of wait and uncertainty and the birth of a healthy first grand-child for us, Emmett in August after a difficult time for daughter Matilda. I have been glad of the understanding and support of the community around these important moments.

Rev Phil Hoffmann

5.2 Church Council Report

A small but dedicated group make up the Blackwood Uniting Church Council which meets bi-monthly. 5 Councillors (Chris Bray, Adrian Brown, Bec English, Ann Magarey and Ashleigh Lower) and 3 Elders (Ian Penny, Tony Miller and Marnie Agnew) are supplemented by Bob Lyon (representing Property Ministry) and Rev Phil Hoffman.

The majority of meetings this year have dealt with Family Ministry, Property, Finance and Ministry Reports, with many hours spent on Family Ministry.

Family Ministry

Family ministry is important to our community. The Kitto Review and other feedback identified that “Worship, Pastoral Care, Family Ministry and Discipleship” are central to BUC. It’s something we’ve always been involved with in our desire to provide “something for everyone” and what’s more, we’re good at it! We have skilled leaders who with a dedicated group of volunteers currently run a Playgroup, Mainly Music, Messy Church and Sunday Children’s Corner. Those involved love their work with children however they need support to develop the ministry further and to look at new directions.

Early in the year we engaged Rev Coral (Cogs) Smith to undertake a review of Family Ministry at BUC including surveying families, volunteers and congregational members. The full report with recommendations was presented to the June Council meeting. I’ve included an excerpt from the report as an Appendix to provide an overview & refresh memories.

We spent a great deal of time reviewing the report, dreaming of the future and struggling with logistics – there’ve been extensive discussions across several meetings. From the 9 recommendations there were 4 that we felt were core to BUC :

- #3 Forming deeper partnerships with families so that over time it’s inclusive and they can develop ownership.
- #4 As well as 11.00 Traditional, 9.15 Family Friendly & Contemporary, consider Messy Church All Age as BUC’s third worship service,
- #5 Continue to improve the Sunday Morning Experience
- #8 Keep looking for a family worker

It became clear that finding the right Family Ministry Worker was core to our discussions. Council has a vision of someone who can provide pastoral care, support the volunteers, develop leadership and do the dreaming about the future. We’d also like this person to have a strong tie to our Church and understanding of the Uniting Church ethos and Blackwood’s vision. Unfortunately it’s been difficult to find this person as anyone with the required skills & interest is active in their own churches.

Previously we’ve advertised for a lay person on Seek. We could do this again but given our vision we’d prefer to have someone who could develop the role as ministry. For this reason we’re recommending that we pursue as an ordained position for at least 0.25 FTE for 2 years. (Note: there are some possibilities!)

Requirements needed for this move include:

- updating the Church profile
- funding the position

Updating the profile is relatively straightforward.

Funding is a different matter . . .

An ordained person costs approx \$10,000 for each 0.1 time, so a 0.25 FTE requires \$25,000 or 0.4 FTE \$40,000. This is a lot of money, but if you share our vision for someone who can be part of our community, supporting volunteers, developing & growing our faith community it can be done.

Our current giving won't cover this & the budget Tony will present on behalf of the Finance Committee doesn't include a Family Ministry worker. Additional funds will be needed from increased planned giving, fundraising and possibly grants.

We've come a long way since Ian Hunter first suggested a Playgroup but it now needs to expand & we need someone who can build on what's already been achieved. The Council believes this is a special project worthy of taking a risk – stepping out in faith.

In summary, Council is in favour of pursuing the ordained position, for at least 0.25 FTE (max 0.4 FTE) for an initial 2 year contract and that be our continuing recommendation to the congregation. We recommend taking the steps to update our profile and all else that pursuing an ordained person entails.

Recommendations:

- 1. Council is requested to pursue an ordained position for Family Ministry of between 0.25 and 0.40 FTE for an initial 2 year contract.**
- 2. The Family Ministry position will funded as a special project for BUC.**

Ministry Team

In August the Presbytery asked Rev Phil Hoffmann if he would be willing to fill in at Westminster as Chaplain until the end of the year on a half-time basis. As a Council we discussed the logistics to ensure Rev Phil wouldn't end up doing 1.5 jobs but agreed to support Phil and the Presbytery in releasing him half time from 1st September to 31st December 2017.

Subsequent to this Rev Dr Adrian Brown agreed to provide half-time Supply Ministry at Blackwood from October – December focusing primarily on pastoral work & worship. We thank Adrian for his willingness to step into this role and we appreciate your help at this time.

Rev Phil continues to provide strong leadership & support to the whole community even though he's currently at Westminster half-time. Worth a special mention is the Occasional Series Rev Phil instigated 3 years ago and which is attracting regular attendances from other denominations as well as our Uniting Church family.

Property – in between all the day to day maintenance & planning, the Property team have also been actively involved in the Roundabout Upgrade consultation. Despite several amicable meetings with DPTI staff the feeling is that the dept has already made their mind up and aren't going to heed our input. Council asked the Chair to write to Sam Duluk, MP and Ministers Hamilton-Smith and Mulligan to advise that the Blackwood Uniting Church Council, at its meeting on Wednesday 18th October, unanimously expressed concern about the Roundabout plans and the impact on the Church itself and the loss of the intrinsic historic character of the corner.

Our Community

Socially 2017 has been a quiet year but Cluster Groups remain strong. In May the *Walk for Reconciliation* followed a combined service at BUC, finishing with Kurna sharing & a sausage sizzle at Colebrook. The following Friday we hosted a movie night (*Motorkite Dreaming*) both in conjunction with the Blackwood Reconciliation Group. These events involved both Blackwood UC and the wider community. Although no fundraisers have been held this year there are already plans for 2018 – watch this space!

October was an exciting time for many of our community – Flora Mansawan was successfully fitted with her prosthetic! For many years members of our community have raised funds to assist Flora and hopefully others in her community. Thanks to Jane Bassham for her perseverance, dedication and vision!

The Community Classes provide a busy hub of activities for approx. 200 people each week and the building complex continues to be well used with a variety of groups hiring rooms on both a regular and an ad hoc basis.

Thanks to everyone who helps BUC to function – gardeners, musicians, handymen, greeters, sound & data projection and many many more. Special thanks to those who have kept Family Ministry alive and well in 2017 through Messy Church, Play Group, Mainly Music and Sunday Children's corner.

Jacqui Harrison as always has been the backbone of the Office and the Community Classes. Council appreciates her leadership in developing and promoting a culture of learning, giving and sharing. On behalf of the many volunteers and the Ministers for whom you provide support – we thank you Jacqui!

Chris Bray
Chair, Blackwood Uniting Church Council

Excerpt from Cogs' report:

Recommendations: There are many things that BUC can do. As a large UCA, it is a church with financial resources and good people with education, skills and capabilities.

It has an excellent building and is in a good location.

It has already established good long-term relationships with several families. Most importantly, it has a congregation with many members who thinks Family Ministry is important. All of this is a good thing in the changing landscape we live.

- 1- **BUC develops its own definition of the Goals and Purpose of Family Ministry, along with the concept of FM being a long-term strategy in BUC's congregational life that is owned and appreciated by BUC.** *There were a few comments in discussions with Cogs that "that's someone else's thing..."*
- 2- **BUC can keep on doing what it is doing and give thanks** for as long as it remains a life giving blessing those family and volunteers involved.
- 3- **Forming deeper partnerships with families so that over time it's inclusive and they can develop ownership.** How do we respectfully encourage good relationships within working and practical partnerships, as well as the "service model"?
- 4- As well as **11.00 Traditional, 9.15 Family Friendly & Contemporary**, consider **Messy Church All Age** as BUC's third worship service, for everyone who like an informal worship time and a shared meal. At MC, encourage an offering to help sustain the congregation as well as the existing donation for food.
- 5- **Continue to improve the Sunday Morning Experience** – 9.15 Worship continues to develop being family friendly and family relevant service, with an engaging Children's Corner with two areas- one each for older and younger children. Worship leaders are encouraged to continue including a Kid's spot/children's talk in the worship planning and possibly find other ways to engage them, working with the Children's Corner volunteers. *Often the children's talk can be engaging for the adults too!*
- 6- **Consider restructure the existing Family Ministry with only one 0-5 year program in order to create more energy for other programs.** Exploring the possibly by creatively combining the best of Playgroup and Mainly Music, so there may be energy and skills to develop other programs? Or possibly running the same program twice a week to cater for parents who can only come on specific days. I.e. (Set up Friday & Repeat on Monday?) *You can't shut down Friday and expect them to turn up on a Monday – parents work specific days, Grandparents look after grandchildren specific days.*
- 7- **Other Strategic Program Ideas** - There were many other suggestions in the survey for things that BUC and Families could be involved together in I.e. Friday Family Nights, Kids Club for 7-12 year olds, more "Messy Events", Family Weekend Walking Group, picnics or other outdoors activity, Developing Small Groups-Home/Study/Bible/Parenting /Coffee/ Picnic/ cluster/ groups. Remembering the 3 legged stool of Families, BUC & Logistics.
- 8- **Keep looking for a family worker**, be clear about what you want. I would suggest someone who can see the vision of BUC, relates well to families and is good at logistics.
- 9- **Keep looking for God's dreams and visions**, never stop believing that God is inviting BUC into the future, for the sake of offering the possibility of God. Amen.

5.3 Finance & Budget for 2016

Our Finance and Stewardship Committee comprises Tony Miller (Chairperson), Jan Furness (Treasurer of the main Church Council Account), Brian Pickering (Treasurer of both the Property team and the Community Outreach program), Mark Gill, Ray Bown (Giving Recorder) and a minister's representative, Phil Hoffmann.

We also assist with financial administration of the Helen Lee Trust Fund, the Blackwood Manse Account, and the Flora Mansawan Trust Fund.

The Finance Committee meets every two months to review the current financial position of the Church and to discuss longer term financial matters.

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 any member of the Congregation upon request.

Expected financial outcome for 2017

Our forecast end of year result from our normal activities is a surplus of \$212. However, we have elected to put aside \$3,225 this year as part provision for our future Long Service Leave liabilities for our Office Staff (Jacqui). This amount covers Jacqui's current 3.5 years of service. In 2018 and future years we will budget for an annual Long Service Leave provision. Although this is a future liability, if it included as a 2017 expense, our forecast end of year result is a deficit of \$3,003.

Note that our 2017 Budget estimated a deficit of \$13,610.

In estimating this end of year result the following items have been taken into account.

1. As the Craft Fair had not taken place when our forecast was prepared, we have estimated the net Craft Fair profit to be \$6,500.

Some of the larger variances from the 2017 Budget estimates have been:

1. Family Ministry staff costs of \$1,600 have been much less than the \$12,000 estimated in the 2017 Budget. This is because there has been no appointment of Family Ministry paid staff in 2017. The only expense of \$1,600 has been for a Consultant's Report (by Cogs).
2. An additional \$3,000 has been spent on a consultant Architect's report on improving the physical appearance and functionality of the church property.
3. Ministers' costs have been reduced by approximately \$2,000 as there was a short period of time when we only had a half-time minister. (This was after Phil commenced his half-time secondment as Chaplin at Westminster, but before Adrian Brown commenced as Supply Minister.)

Estimated Offering income is very close to budget at \$166,000. This represents approximately 65% of our total income.

Further details will be presented at the AGM on 12th November 2017.

Proposed Budget for 2018

Our proposed 2018 Budget estimates a deficit of \$2,200. In arriving at this estimate we have made the following assumptions:

1. An anticipated reduction in income from Offerings due to members of the congregation leaving, retiring or down-sizing their contributions (from \$166,000 in 2017 to \$164,000 in 2018.) Note that a general increase in Offerings of around 2% would remove our estimated 2018 deficit.
2. Increase in Ministry and Office staff costs of approximately 2%.
3. The net profit from the Garage Sale and the Community Program Craft Fair in 2018 will be similar to the results achieved in 2017.
4. Anticipated annual increase in Utilities, Insurance and Office Operating costs of approximately \$1,500 (7%).
5. No provision has been made for the appointment of paid Family Ministry staff in 2017.

Further details will be presented at the AGM on 12th November, 2017.

Tony Miller
Chair, Finance and Stewardship Committee
31st October, 2017.

7.1 Relief Minister

It has only been a matter of weeks since I took up my task of sharing in the ministry here at Blackwood while Phil Hoffmann is released to act as Chaplain at Westminster School.

I have sought to begin pastoral visits, especially to members of the 11.00 worshipping community, as well as sharing in the leading of worship where Phil and I have responsibility for about half of the services between now and the end of December.

Of course, the Blackwood community is not new to me and, as a member of the Church Council I have been privy to the challenges that confront us as we seek to determine a forward direction.

This is not easy because it isn't all that easy to try and foresee what future ministry directions lie before us and this remains a challenge as we look at where we need to go in terms of family ministry.

I would also like to place on record my very deep appreciation for the many volunteers that help to make our ministry to the Blackwood community real and purposeful. Without volunteers we would be in a state of great disarray and we would not be able to make any impact on the world beyond the Roundabout.

Thank you! To each and every one of you. God bless you!!!

The Rev Dr Adrian Brown

7.2 Community Classes

Since I last reported to the Congregation in May, there has been a flurry of activity within the Community Classes.

The annual Craft Fair & Exhibition was held last Saturday, with huge participation from members of the Community Program. All classes were represented and there were 31 stalls. Of particular note is the Community Café raising over \$2,000. This was staffed entirely by women from the Classes themselves, a sign of their commitment and belonging to what we do and provide. The participation by members of the congregation in this outreach and fundraiser is valued highly by the program. Our takings were slightly down this year due to a few changes with the Gardening Stall but it was a decision we made to try and ease the workload of a particular few committed helpers. As always, my aim is to showcase our classes and every person who entered the door received a program. – out of this I have had 6 new enrolments just this week. A huge thank you goes to all who participated and lent us their time and muscle and enthusiasm.

In regards to the figures, as at the 10th November our bank account balance is \$26,000. We are on budget for this year and will likely see a profit at the end of the year. This is a pleasing result as it was only four years ago that we were reviewing the very future of the Community Classes [the “Eland Report”]. As we have a surplus in the bank it was decided at our Community Classes Management Committee Meeting to increase most of the Tutors wages to \$20 / hr instead of \$15 / hr to give them an incentive to keep coming back and recognize their great work. Also, with money from the Community Classes I have purchased 3 new coffee machines and 8 new trestle tables which enables us to get rid of the old heavy tables for ease of shifting.

One need we have with Community Classes is help with furniture moving every week, unfortunately we lost Jim Alvey who had been helping set-up every Wednesday morning for over 10 years. This duty now lies in my hands and along with one of my creche workers I shift every table and chair Wednesday morning and pack-up with Sue Fisher every Thursday afternoon. I would love to enlist some helpers in this area – only during term time but I am realistic that with an ageing congregation this is unlikely to happen. I try to look at it in a positive way and remind myself I am saving money on gym fees!

Fundraising

We held the Uniting Care Pancake Day in Term 1 and raised \$200. We didn’t technically make pancakes as I refused to be in the kitchen all day again (not a productive way of spending my time) and we had Hot Cross Buns instead.

We ran a fundraising Morning Tea at the end of Term 1 to raise funds for the Leukaemia Foundation. Sadly, we lost one of our own students to this cruel disease last year so we wanted to honor her memory through hosting a Morning Tea. We raised \$350. Then in Term 3 we held the Biggest Morning Tea and raised \$345 for the Cancer Council.

For Mother’s Day last year I organized potted Chrysanthemums to on-sell which was received very well with a sell out of plants in the first week. Next year I will be ordering double the amount hoping to raise even more funds.

Connecting people to each other and to organizations in need has benefits for the individuals and the community as a whole. Opportunities for people to connect can reduce the impact of social isolation, have positive health benefits, promote cross cultural and inter-generational understanding and build strong resilient communities.
[Canterbury City Community Centre]

On this note, a project that the Classes worked on this year was the Sewing Kits of which I organized a workshop and 47 kits were made and packed and sent to countries in need such as Cambodia.

The men and women involved in the Bike Shed continue to save scores of bikes from going to landfill and have seen the bikes reissued in the community often free of charge. Of particular note is the collaboration with the Blackwood Circle of Friends donating 47 bikes to the Refugees living in Salisbury.

All the elements that go together to make this, or any caring community, do not happen by chance. To make a difference in people's lives requires commitment, passion and a real sense of purpose; all of which are exhibited by the many volunteers and tutors who contribute so much to the Community Classes. Thank you to all who help in any way – without your input, we would just be an activity provider. Of particular note I would like to thank Sue Fisher and Chris Bray who are an enormous asset to the Classes and to me – I never have to ask them to do anything it is just done and they anticipate my every need. Also, Doff Lyon, Bev Eccleston and Lynona Hawkins who are stalwart supporters of the Community Classes and look after me and the participants without prejudice and with a smile on their face.

Each week participants have the opportunity to meet with others and form important connections that may have significant impact on their lives. The sense of community is very real and I feel very proud to be a part of it.

Jacqui Harrison
Community Program Coordinator

7.3 Property

Property Committee Membership Graham Brown, Peter Cranwell, Russell Grear, **Lisa Haddrick**, David Hawkins, Phil Hoffman, John Hewitt, Bob Lyon (Secretary), Geoff McLean, Phil and Jane Marlow, **Tony Otworowski** (Chair) Ray & Meg Pentland, Brian Pickering (Treasurer), Bob and Jean Potter, **Keith Rodda**, Peter Smith and Mark Williams.

Committee Role The Property Committee continues to ensure that the Church complex is well maintained and appropriate for the more than 30 Church and community groups that use the complex on a regular basis. However the majority of the complex and some of the equipment is now 45 years old and in need of upgrading. Property Committee and some users are actively considering what can, and should, be done to ensure that it meets the needs of current and future users.

Funding for property development, maintenance, insurance, security, cleaning, power, and other ongoing expenses are covered from **room hire** providing around \$15,000, **garage sale** profits of \$5,000, **donations**, and a \$12,000 **transfer from general funds**. There are also considerable savings from the **many voluntary hours** contributed by members of the committee - a number of whom are reaching the age when it is no longer safe for them to climb ladders or undertake some maintenance tasks. The Committee plans to run another mini **garage sale on Saturday 21st April 2018**.

Maintenance and Development A storm on 20th April blocked the box gutter above the foyer which overflowed causing considerable **damage to the foyer** and offices costing over \$12,000 to repair. Fortunately most of this was covered by insurance but some Church activities were interrupted for several weeks. **Thanks to Russell Grear** for managing the repair process and the committee for modifications to roof drainage to reduce the possibility of future problems. A **wheel chair** and **defibrillator** (located in the foyer) have been purchased and are available, should they be needed, by any group using the complex. Our **thanks to the Pentlands** for organising this and to their son Gary for providing training on its use. Other major work included the completion in January of the storage **cupboards in the western annex** of the Chapel donated by the Haddrick family and the installation of **exhaust fans** in both Ladies and Men's toilets. Management of storage space is an ongoing issue with many groups needing space for equipment used when they hire our facilities.

Office improvements included the provision of a **new computer**, changes to the **phone system** including changing to the **NBN** and the approval for an additional cupboard for the back office.

New Signage was approved with the help of Andrew Knight of "Signs by Knight" but Mitcham Council approval and installation has had to be deferred pending the final plans for the roundabout upgrade.

Church Gardens These are a feature of our Church and a credit to **John Hewitt and his team** of volunteer gardeners. It is important that the roundabout upgrade is not allowed to diminish this asset.

Blackwood Roundabout Upgrade will have a **major impact** on the Church. The proposal to move and enlarge the roundabout and to install a left turn slip lane from Main Road (south) into Coromandel Parade could mean the loss of all the present War Memorial park, and the loss of some Church property including the gardens between the Church and the present War Memorial. Property Committee representatives have been involved in **2 “consultation” meetings with DPTI** Project team and lobbying with appropriate Members of Parliament. We have also argued for **safe pedestrian access** across and between Main Road and Coromandel Parade, for **retention of parking** on Main Road for at least most of the day and weekends, for **recompense for changes** to gardens and signage, and for recognition of the potential increase in **traffic noise**. It is anticipated that final plans will be known in November with work expected to begin before the end of the year.

Blackwood Manse The manse is under the control of the Council of Cooperation and continues to be occupied by private tenants. The Manse Maintenance Fund currently stands at **approximately \$40,000**. It is hoped that at some stage in the near future, agreement will be reached to allow a portion of this to be **distributed to the four contributing Churches**.

Bob Lyon
Secretary, Property Committee

7.4 Family Ministries

Family Ministry since 2010 and into the future

We've come a long way in our current directions in Family Ministry since we began Playgroups in 2010, when a mum walked in off the street and asked did we have a playgroup, and if not, would we consider starting one. One playgroup soon became two with the addition of the Baby playgroup at 12 noon. Playgroups were then, and still are, mainly secular in content, (though we celebrate Christmas and Easter as integral to our Christian story), so as a way of adding a faith element to what we were offering, at the end of the first year we began special 'celebrations' for families with young children at Christmas and Easter and then at the end of each term. These then morphed into Messy Church after Rev Cogs was appointed. We then added Mainly Music as a pre-school music program with a Christian/faith based flavour. In the meantime the children's corner on Sunday morning at 9.15 has grown into a space for building relationships with families, a nurturing corner for young children and a teaching and relationship-building time for a number of older children. We also leave the space set up for any visiting children at 11am.

So a playgroup with 6 families on the first day has now grown to four separate arms of family ministry.

We have now reached the stage of 'where to next?' Children in the families are growing older and needs are changing. In my opinion, as a church, faith is our core business and that is where we need to concentrate our future direction. Messy Church and the 9.15 Children's corner are the places where faith development happens. Playgroup and Mainly Music are programs that basically run themselves, but Messy Church and the 9.15 Children's corner need to move from being 'programs' provided for families to 'consume' into a partnership with the families, where they participate and 'own' it, and have a say in how it develops and runs, and help with the provision and development of what happens.

This in my opinion is the work of an ordained person who would work in partnership with Rev Phil, with the families and with the volunteers who would still be needed to build and maintain the relationship with the rest of the church congregation. There is still a place for Playgroup and Mainly Music and it would be good for the Family Ministry person to play a role, but the work of the Family Ministry person should mainly focus on the spiritual ministry to families, developing participation and ownership and working on dreams for the future.

Marnie Agnew November 2017

7.5 Playgroup

We are coming to the end of our 8th year of Roundabout Playgroup and as I reflect on this year I see that the nature of the playgroup has evolved and changed over the years. In the first few years we had over 60 families on the roll with 25-40 families attending regularly, the adults bringing children were mostly young parents (mostly with one child), we had a separate baby group for parents with 0-12 months, and we had occasional overcrowding issues. Eight years down the track:

- the stress on our numbers has reduced as schools have started providing playgroups and Early Learning Centres, so our numbers have reduced to 25-30 families on the roll, with 10-15 families attending weekly in winter, 15-20 in the warmer months;
- social changes such as parents returning to work and public policy issues such as immunisation requirements present their own challenges
- around 40% of the children are brought by grandparents (and on some days the grandparents present outnumber the parents!);
- families have returned with their second and sometimes third child;
- over 40% of the families bring two or 3 children, and two family day carers bring 4 children.

So the clientele is somewhat different and the needs have diversified:

- Parents with two children often need assistance with supervision of one of their children so our volunteers spend more time interacting with the children than in the early years.
- The number of grandparents attending reflects the growing trend in society of grandparents becoming grandchild-minders; they tend to be more regular than young parents so their attendance numbers are more stable. Grandparents appreciate being able to talk with other child-minding grandparents and they find it easy to talk to our volunteers who are of similar age, so our pastoral conversations have changed somewhat. We endeavour to be aware so that parents don't feel out-numbered.
- Family day carers bringing four children raise questions of supervision and independent play, and how much do we charge them?
- We have raised the question of non-immunisation with Church Council who discussed the issue and have requested advice from Synod re any policy the UCA might have on exclusion or non-exclusion, and assistance if we need to develop a policy.

While the basic format and program remains the same we continue to refine the content, with new stories and crafts as appropriate, and updating songs to include, for instance, songs from the Wiggles. Parental involvement is encouraged, currently we have a couple of parents involved in storytelling and leading the singing, and all parents help with packing up. At the end of this year we will sadly say farewell to quite a few children who have been with us for several years, so next year will bring new beginnings.

As always we are indebted to the people of Blackwood UC for volunteering for so many tasks and roles: providing morning tea, talking with parents and interacting with children, helping with setting up and cleaning up, reading stories and singing songs, preparing the craft activities. Too many to name individually, but without you Playgroup wouldn't even get off the ground.

We frequently receive comments about the excellence of the program and the friendliness and hospitality we provide, so know you are appreciated. Special thanks to those who have responded to the request for help setting up on Sunday mornings, to those who helped clean up while several of our regulars were away last term, and to the musicians who made our end of term musical extravaganza such a memorable experience for the children.

Thanks to the Property Committee for ongoing support and assistance (and for replacing the rubber stoppers on the metal chairs at short notice during the holidays). And to our core team of Carys Penny, Glenys Reid, Jean Potter and Sue Fisher, and to John Whitbread and Bruce Marriott who turn up faithfully every week to set up, pack up, clean up, talk to parents and play with children, my most grateful thanks for keeping the wheels oiled and turning, behind the scenes and up front too. You provide the firm foundation on which Playgroup is built.

**Marnie Agnew on behalf of the Roundabout Playgroup team.
October 2017**

7.6 Mainly Music

Mainly music is now in its 5th year of operation and has had consistent numbers over that time. The average attendance is 13 adults with 20 children most weeks. There are 20 volunteers from our church community including 6 cake makers who provide morning tea for the parents. These volunteers come on a roster system so no one is overloaded.

The music leaders are Carys Penny, Bev. Eccleston and Judy Lower and the welcomers are Gwenyth Hewitt and Rachel Williams. Ray Bown leads the data team including Milton Turner, Neville Pope and Anne Grear. Mary Bown and Jan Turner head the hospitality team who prepare fruit for the children and morning tea for the parents with many other volunteers helping over the year. Sue Fisher and others care for the children during playtime.

The team members meet once a term to discuss ideas and re-affirm our goals. This year we developed a vision statement which is compatible with our church vision statement.

“We believe that all people are precious and loved by God. We endeavour to share God’s love through caring and nurturing relationships within a safe and welcoming community. We believe that our Christian faith should be shared so everyone may have abundant life.”

The values of mainly music are Celebration, Hospitality, Honour, Creativity, Connection and Generosity. The team members pray before each session and during the session we sometimes introduce a serious topic for deeper thought for the parents. We also discuss the learning of musicality and other aspects of child development. Easter and Christmas are celebrated each year and the families are given children’s books to help introduce the Christian meaning of these events

One family who had not attended for a year came back and said she and her children had missed mainly music so much they had to return. Other family ministry activities such as Messy Church and playgroup are promoted and the families are encouraged to attend.

All congregational members are welcome to come and visit on a Friday morning and volunteers are always needed especially in the winter months when some of the regular helpers are away.

Carys Penny

7.7 Messy Church

Messy Church has continued under Rev Phil's leadership and guidance, meeting monthly during term time, on the first Sunday of the month except for Father's Day, with 10 Messy Church sessions in 2017. Numbers have been consistently around 6-9 families, with greater participation on special occasions like the beginning of the year (New Beginnings) and Easter. We have a total of 22 active families on the roll, including 3 families who have tried MC for the first time in 2017. We also maintain contact with a number of families from past years, who have not attended this year but who have long-established links to the church family.

This year we took the theme of 'People of the Bible', with most stories coming from the Old Testament, but including Jesus (Easter) and Peter (Pentecost). Old Testament stories included Abraham, Hannah, Samuel, Ruth, David, Solomon, Jonah and we will finish the year as always with the Christmas story. Each month we have given the children a star-shaped activity page which will be glued together at the end of the year as a People of the Bible booklet, as a record of the year's stories. As in past years we will give a Christmas take-home bag to families, including Messy Church, Sunday 9.15 and baptism families, with Christmas messages and a small gift from the BUC community. If anyone would like to contribute to the cost of these bags please see Marnie Agnew. The cost will be between \$5 – \$10 each.

With Rev Phil as coordinator, our team of faithful volunteers has continued to work behind the scenes and up-front to make sure it happens seamlessly for the families. This year we were very pleased to welcome Christine and Danny Roach back to the team, and Elisabeth Williams to the welcoming desk. Grateful thanks to Rev Phil for his leadership and guidance, and to all who have given their time and talents to maintain Messy Church as we continue to search for the way forward into the future. Special thanks to Judy Adami who is responsible for the evening meal and provides a great variety of tasty meals each month on a shoe-string budget; thanks also to the Swags women who have helped with meals on a number of occasions, and to our barbeque 'experts', David Agnew and Ian Penny.

On-going issues:

- **Family Ministry position:** Council has discussed at length the issue of a Family Ministry Worker in order to find the best way forward.
- **Challenges:**
 - what to do as children grow older and their needs change;
 - how to encourage families to engage more deeply, more frequently, in spiritual/faith-related activities and invest in the spiritual development of their children;
 - how to make Messy Church change from a program for 'consumers' to a faith community that takes responsibility for itself, i.e. how to encourage the families to take a more active role in 'owning' their Messy Church community, in leadership, in running activities, and in contributing more financially;
 - who is the best sort of person to employ to do this job: How do we find someone who is committed to the community at BUC, who knows the UCA, understands the vision at BUC and is best equipped to lead the families into a faith-related future?

I commend Council's recommendation for your prayerful consideration.

Marnie Agnew, Elder, November 2017

7.8 Urban Mission Network

The Urban Mission Network comprises 34 congregations (one being BUC) and two faith communities located in communities across the state and has an informal relationship with Heavens Spring Methodist Uniting Church.

The aim of the Network is to encourage each other in ministry and mission, share resources and provide mutual support. The system of networks replaced the former regional Presbytery structure (we were then part of "Fleurieu") and is designed to encourage our sharing and participation in the wider church. It is an organised way of recognising that "we belong together". Other churches in "Urban Mission" are linked as we have similar mission context and perspectives and include Clayton-Wesley, Rosefield, Pilgrim, Morialta and Bridgewater.

During the year, as the BUC rep, I attended 3 of the 4 UMN meetings plus 1 Workshop and 1 Conference that were put on by member congregations. A brief summary of each for reference can be found in Appendix A. Some of the meetings were also attended by others from BUC.

Some of the recurring and relevant themes that came through to me this year were:

- The need to engage more and be more relevant to our local communities.
- Regeneration of buildings and congregations are goals of many
- Effectively determining our future direction in the above will demand involvement of everyone involved including community stakeholders.

There are some key players in the UMN that ensure each meeting is run very well, always with a topical subject for consideration as well as giving great opportunity for catching up around a meal. The format works well and is probably part of the reason the participation rate seemed to me to be quite high.

I suggest BUC should offer to run one of the gatherings next year. I think there is much we have to showcase as far as what we do here. However, I would like to think that given the Palestinian connection we have, we could consider running a programme that highlights their plight with suggestions for ways that the UMN communities could support their cause.

I am happy to continue to be your representative on the UMN but just as happy to stand down if this allows others to participate.

Peter Cranwell

APPENDIX A

UMN meetings and associated events attended by Peter Cranwell in 2017

24th November 2016

Morialta Uniting Church

Ministry on the Edges - Rev Wendy Prior and Rev Mark Boyce

Shared stories from people who have experienced mental health problems, what worked, what didn't, how faith was important in their recovery, and how people might be assisted in their recovery. Stories of how "Club Church" was set up and mental health programmes it runs.

Some learnings: -

- Must tell the message "God cares for you no matter what"
 - Often carers (family or others) are left out in the cold when managing MH issues. More education, communication and general involvement is important to provide.
 - "Shame" is a huge issue. Therefore important that prayers of confession in worship are avoided or at least not included until the end. Otherwise peoples' shame is heightened when talking about confession and they disengage from anything that follows. The Church needs to develop a theology on Shame.
 - Consider getting Mark to run Mental Health Seminars (7 blocks) at BUC. Consider joining with CofC?
-

February 2017

Pilgrim Uniting Church

Theme: Organisation for Wellness - Geoff Boyce

Geoff used his 20 years of experience with the Oasis Centre, to propose that the way we organise ourselves as a Church, is critical to creating foundations for well being of all participants. Geoff showed us various models of organisations and traced them through history. It was clear that the types of organisations that are successful today, especially with the X & Y generations, have an entirely different model to previous ones of history.

We as the church, need to reflect on this and determine how we need to change our systems, structures and operations to be more able to communicate with relevance and inclusiveness to the community around us.

31st August

Modbury Uniting Church

Spirituality and Ageing - Ken Burt and Rev Dr Elizabeth Vreugdenhil

The Creative Ageing and Spirituality Collaboratory, a project endorsed by Presbytery/Synod and sponsored and facilitated through the Urban Mission Network was launched at this meeting.

Rev Dr Elizabeth Vreugdenhil spoke of emerging trends she has observed as people explore meaning as we age.

Ken Burt gave an overview of how the Collaboratory came into being and the evolving structure that it may take.

Essentially it will become a vehicle to explore avenues for persons in laterlife to contribute wisdom, find resources for meaning, review and explore faith formation and spirituality that applies to their life journeys, and focus on enriching their remaining years.

At this stage it is in its infancy, but I expect more information will be published soon.

16 September 2017

Pilgrim Uniting

Public Theology Workshop - Professor Linda Woodhead from the University of UK

Linda shared with us insights she has gained from working with congregations in Britain as they identify ways they can make better connections with their local communities. We had opportunities to discuss with her the implications for our congregations and to identify some of the actions we could take to increase our communication with the people within our community.

30 October 2017

Clayton Wesley Uniting Church

Regenerating Places of Faith Conference

The conference was arranged to address the difficulties and possibilities that our current situations present. How can congregations re-imagine their life and their role as stewards of their ageing buildings? How might congregations, other community groups, and local businesses work in partnerships to restore and re-purpose historic church buildings as functional centres of community development? What wider community resources, including state and local government, can be harnessed?

Members of local (and some interstate) congregations, denominational leaders; people involved in local government, the National Trust, the State Heritage Unit of the Department of Environment Water and Natural Resources and heritage architects were all present.

One of the key speakers was Peter Worland, Executive Director of UnitingCare, the services and advocacy arm of the Uniting Church in New South Wales and the ACT. This organisation is one of the largest welfare and community development agencies in Australia. Peter works across New South Wales seeking to bring churches and communities together in community projects and delivery of services. Much of what he has been able to achieve could be relevant to how we move forward in Blackwood. Notes from his presentation will be available soon.

7.9 MHICC

As your Minister, I represent you in this important united faith expression, along with faithful and ever-serving Bev Eccleston. I have continued in the role of Chair this year, my third of a two-year term! Finding people to step up to these roles is an abiding challenge. Maxine Moore from the Churches of Christ has similarly tried to hand over the important role of Secretary this year, but again with no ‘takers’.

In 2017 our combined meetings have been hosted at Blackwood Hills Baptist [March], Blackwood Uniting [May], Coromandel Uniting [August], with Belair Catholic [‘Our Lady of the Way’] to come in November (19th).

Our challenge as a group of Church communities this year has been the State Government decision NOT to give Commonwealth funding [the NSCP, National Schools Chaplaincy Program] to three local primary schools [Hawthorndene, Blackwood and Coromandel Valley]. This was done on the basis of a ‘socio-economic indicator’, with needy rural and remote schools being added to the program but within the existing Budget; therefore some schools missed out – three (3) of our local five (5). The Inter-Church Council has managed this by re-allocating our support of chaplains to these schools in particular. So whereas in 2016 we funded five (5) local chaplains for three additional hours/week (on top of their 12 Government NSCP hours), this year we have funded just these three schools a total of 6 hours each per week. Whilst this gives them each limited hours, it does maintain a presence in each school. Fortunately, we also had unused funding for Chaplains in ‘reserve’ and have been able to support the program out of those for 2017. To continue this in the coming year will be at a cost to Inter-Church Council reserves, to which we, along with all the local churches, contribute [our part \$2360 per annum].

To mark our special relationship with Blackwood Primary through the “*Kid’s Hope*” program and as a gesture of support to the Chaplain there, in Schools Week” (last week of October), I gave a word of thanks to staff on behalf of local churches at a specially-organised morning tea. After some consultation about an appropriate gift to express this support, Blackwood Uniting gave several self-watering pot plants to brighten up the physical aspect of designated areas of the school.

The other shared ministry of the Inter-Church Council is “Beacon” Emergency Relief housed at Blackwood Churches of Christ and ably led by Jenny Horne as Co-ordinator. This continues to be important in meeting needs of a large local client base.

Later in December we at Blackwood Uniting will host the Combined

“Blue Christmas” Service, 7:00 p.m. December 21st

a well-attended community initiative which meets needs of people bearing emotions other than jolly cheer at Christmas-time.

Informally, local Ministers (most of whom do NOT attend the Inter-Church Council) have this year been hosted to two (2) morning teas by our local member of State Parliament, Sam Duluk to share local issues and news.

If you feel a commitment to ecumenical relations there is opportunity to serve on the Inter-Church Council.

Rev Phil Hoffmann

7.10 Blackwood Reconciliation Group

BRG continue their pattern of monthly meetings here at Blackwood Uniting. That meeting is the first Wednesday of each month, so unfortunately it is simultaneous with “Blackwood Circle of Friends for Refugees” in our building, meaning several people committed to each can’t go to both meetings.

This year Blackwood Uniting co-operated again with BRG to organise the local “*Walk of Reconciliation*” as a public way of marking Reconciliation Week in May. This followed a fantastic service of worship led by Ashleigh Lower [remember the symbolic chairs?] and featuring indigenous artist Elly Lovegrove. I think (sadly) we are amongst few communities Australia-wide still doing anything to mark this opportunity in Aboriginal – white fella relations. Although the weather was not greatly conducive, we still saw some two hundred people of various community groups walk together from the round-about to the former Colebrook site on Shepherd’s Hill Road. My thanks to all who provided soup and sausages as stories were exchanged.

Reconciliation Week also acted on Anne Magarey’s initiative to provide a screening of the film “Motor Kite Dreaming” tracking the voyage of two intrepid Melbourne ultra-light pilots across Aboriginal communities in Australia. This gathered about 100 people here on a cold Friday night in June.

Regular meetings of the BRG hear from guest speakers presenting on some aspect of relations between Aboriginal and settler Australians. This past year has unfortunately seen some of these meeting affected by personality issues making effective meetings harder to achieve, However, new people are being attracted to attend and participate and it is heartening that we as a faith community are host of this expression and cause.

Believing that Reconciliation is a key national issue and the link with the BRG a significant community partnership, Phil attends these monthly meetings and would welcome any who share a heart for relations with our First Peoples.

Rev Phil Hoffmann

7.11 Library

“To you it is just another book, to me it is another adventure” *Anon*

This year 55 adult books, 12 children’s books, and 2 DVDs have been added to the church library, mainly through donations and book sales.

The library is classified by the Dewey Decimal Classification but three groups have been provided with a separate shelf at their request – Messy Church, Mainly Music and the Community Program.

It is good that it is a walk through library as people can see new books on display and other items to borrow.

This year we have purchased “Our Mob, God’s story: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists share their faith” This is an art book with 115 works in an exciting variety of styles and stories by 66 established and emerging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists.

Grant Lock in his book “Shoot me first” tells of his 24 years in the hotspots of Pakistan and Afghanistan. The author offers intriguing and compassionate insights into the Tribal Territories that straddle the two countries.

Thank you to all who donated books or made suggestions for new additions.

Joy Belling

7.12 Blackwood Circle of Friends for Refugees

Minutes from Blackwood Circle of Friends for Refugees Meeting held Wednesday November 1st, 2017

Present: Tricia, Catherine, John and Beth, Ronald, Helen, , Karen, Francine and Jim, Rob and Trish, Alex, Gloria and Malcolm, Lynona and David, Marta, Ruth, Ashleigh

Apologies: Jane Bange, Carys and Ian, Chelsea, Marlies

- Reflections on the current situation: issues included concern re situation on Manus island, clamp down on onshore detention not allowing any gifts or food, lack of political will to resolve the crisis

AGM

Annual treasurer's report tabled. Moved by John, seconded by Rob that it be accepted and so carried. Shows our second most successful fundraising year ever.

Convenors report: we have achieved most of what we set out to do for the year including developing 3 strategic partnerships: Salisbury Circle, Local asylum seeker family (now returned) have been supported through court case and other issues and a range of new members have joined the group.

Direct Contact report:

Alex tabled a list she has kept which shows full record of all the help given to asylum seekers and refugees over the course of the year- to be distributed with the minutes

All positions declared open:

Convenor: Trisha Rushton re-elected

Treasurer: John Shepherd re-elected

Secretary: Catherine Hurley re-elected

Direct contact: Alex to continue with support from Rob, Trish and Marlies

Advocacy and Community Awareness: to be taken on by Karen Hockley

Ideas for next year:

Use stories of past refugees who have settled successfully to raise awareness

Quiz night with refugee connected questions?

Community BBQ at start of year

Music- band available

How to get stories in the media

November meeting

- Treasurer report: tabled
- Update from Groups

Direct Contact :

Dental work needed by pregnant Afghani refugee woman, now in second stage. Money set aside to help pay for 3 extractions.

STTARS have approached for help: a man who was refused a disability pension and now wants to get his truck license, costing \$2000. Has a back injury and caseworker believes truck driving not feasible- possible to help with other training

Syrian family Alex is visiting in Marion- Husband and wife keen to find work. He has been doing gardening- contact Alex on 0438564653 if you have any suitable work. Mother would like to do Aged Care certificate but English is not yet good enough- maybe next year.

- Visit to Megs Lamb's group on Monday 9th of October
John and Alex, Rob and Trish delivered bikes, toys, donations and food from Church to the Salisbury group- this was much appreciated.

Fundraising:

- Bunnings Marion BBQ- **very successful and thanks go to Ronald for organizing and co-ordinating**
- Lions Shed- November- roster full and commencing this Saturday
- St Jude's- also November. Tickets are \$20 and we have 60 to sell. Group has sold some with more still available. Performance is on Wednesday the 15th of November and is "The importance of being Earnest" Tickets available from Beth Shepherd. 8370 0473- promoted by Karen on Coast FM

Advocacy and Community Awareness :

Blackwood Christmas Pageant: Friday 1st of December. Plenty of people available to participate. Rob to organize signs with Karen. Meet at Gulfview Rd at 630pm, John to advise where in future email.

Karen had information on Open Garden in Coromandel Valley in support of local refugee family- Sunday 11th of November, 2-5pm, 1 Jacarranda Dr, Coromandel Valley.

Alex had information on concert featuring The Borderers at The Effective Living Centre, on 24/11/17 at 8pm, Tickets \$30, 26 King William Rd Wayville

Proceeds to Refugees

Tricia attended a talk by Gillian Triggs earlier in which she spoke about Human rights- notes to be circulated. **Also distributed direct line to Prime Ministers office and urged everyone to call re Manus situation**

02 62777700

Next meeting: 6th December, 2017

Tricia Rushton