



Presbytery of Port Phillip East



Annual Report 2023



Port Phillip East Presbytery

Annual Report

March 16 2024



A caring, responsive and efficient Presbytery office is the key to fulfilling the mission of the Presbytery. Some of our work in 2023 has been ensuring that we have such an office for 2024 and beyond.

I am very happy to report that Jay Robinson has accepted our call to be the Presbytery-Minister-Team Leader, Robin Yang has accepted our call to be the PM-Church Development and that Anneke Oppewal is continuing as our Presbytery-Minister-Pastoral. Anne Kim is continuing as the Presbytery Secretary and Sarah Manase as the Communications Officer. We have a group of highly talented individuals committed to working as a team to fulfill the mission of the Presbytery.

The Presbytery Ministry Team has worked well in 2023 despite many changes and challenges. Duncan left us at the end of 2022, and we recruited David Higham as a PM Supply to take over some of Duncan's work. I was able to spend more time working with the team and Anneke contributed greatly to all areas of our work. Craig Mitchell returned to South Australia in the middle of the year and we recruited Robin Yang as a second PM Supply to take up some of Craig's work, especially the Casey Cardinia Project. I enjoyed working closely with the team in 2023 and thank them all for their patience with me and their dedication to the work.

As you will see in detail later in this report, we have made considerable progress in our Casey Cardinia Regional Mission. Robin Yang began his role as Project Manager on 20 June 2023 and set about clarifying many aspects of the mission and governance of the project. We recruited Zi Zhang in October to be the Interim Project Team Leader and the Standing Committee agreed that the Chairperson of Presbytery would be the Chair of the Casey Cardinia Steering Committee. Part of the work in 2023 has been to finalise the agreement with the Trinity Brighton congregation for their generous contribution to the Project.

Act2 is a major transformational change project focussed on discerning and deciding on the future of the Uniting Church in Australia.

The Act2 Project Team released their third report 'Act2: In Response to God's Call in June 2023. We were introduced to this report at our August Presbytery in Council meeting and the Standing Committee called a special meeting on 31 October 2023 to develop our 'Collective Discernment Response'. You can access the report [via the link](#) and our response can be viewed [here](#).

Fiona Wynn (our Acting Deputy Chair), James Douglas (the Chair of the Pastoral Relations Committee), Sam Joo and Ira Budiono all leave the Standing Committee at the end of 2023. I thank them for their contributions to the work of the Presbytery and look forward to their continuing support of the Church in our area.

I have been the Chairperson of the Presbytery since June 2020. I started during the pandemic lock-down and got to know many of you from your presence on my computer screen. I have since visited many congregations but not as many as I had hoped. The Uniting Church in this Presbytery is resource rich but cash poor. We struggle to find the cash to employ ministry agents in our Casey Cardinia Regional Mission and yet know that we have more than a quarter of a billion dollars' worth of property in our trust. Trinity Brighton has given us an example of how to use our resources by their generous gift to the Casey Cardinia Regional Mission. I hope that this is the first of many such sharings.

I have enjoyed my time as the Chairperson. I thank all of you for your faithful work in spreading the gospel in the small area of the world for which we are responsible. May God be with us all.

Tom Spurling, Presbytery Chair (January, 2024)



Vision, mission principles, values, & priorities



At the Presbytery in Council meeting in March 2023, the mission of the Church in our Presbytery for 2022 was shared. Members of the Presbytery were presented for discussions on what they would like to see happen in 2023.

We as a presbytery have adopted mission priorities listed below that will shape the work of our committees and ministry team.

Vision

Our vision as a movement of the Uniting Church in this region picks up the three elements of the vision outlined by the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, with the addition of a focus on building up healthy communities of faith.

As the Uniting Church in Port Phillip East

- Following Christ
- Walking together as first and second peoples
- Seeking community, compassion, and justice for all creation
- Building up healthy communities of faith

Mission Principles

We have adopted the seven mission principles developed across the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, as a way of honouring the many ways we share together in God's mission in the world.

God in Christ is at mission in the world and sends the Church in the Spirit to:

1. Share the Good News of Jesus Christ
2. Nurture followers of Christ in life-giving communities of reconciliation
3. Respond in compassion to human need
4. Live justly and seek justice for all
5. Care for creation
6. Listen to each generation and culture so as to live out the Gospel in fresh ways.
7. Pursue God's mission in partnership

Shared Values

We reflected on the flavour of church we believe God is calling us to express at this time.

Growing a culture of local mission and ministry marked by

- Healthy relationships
- Lifelong disciples
- Collaborative leaders
- Active engagement with agencies, schools and each other.

Synod's Strategic Priorities

We also note that the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania has adopted the following three strategic priorities over the period 2016-2022.

1. Ministries which foster diverse gathered communities of renewal, Christian practice and mission
2. Culturally diverse mission and ministry
3. Mission and ministry with children, youth, their families and young people.

Presbytery Strategic Priorities for 2023

The Presbytery Standing Committee is developing strategies for advancing the Presbytery's capacity in relation to:

- Exploring Local Mission
- Covenanting – First and Second Peoples

Mission Priorities

The Presbytery's Mission Leadership Development Committee has worked with the Standing Committee to identify three areas that will guide their work 2023.

- Intercultural Ministry & Mission
- Listening to First Peoples
- Forming Lifelong Disciples
- New Ways of Being Faith Communities
- Expressing Faith in Everyday Life

Our emerging priorities for 2023

- Ministry wellbeing and networking
- Casey-Cardinia regional collaboration
- Journey of listening and discovery

Standing Committee Report

Members

Tom Spurling (Chair), David Higham (Deputy Chair), Anne Kim (Secretary), James Douglas (Pastoral Relations Committee), Gavin Faichney (Property Committee), Ennis Macleod (Mission and Leadership Development Committee), Jeff Gardiner (Treasurer), Sam Joo (elected), Joy Blamires (elected), Ira Budiono (co-opted in February), and Fiona Winn (co-opted in March)

Standing Committee Meetings in 2023, all at Noble Park unless otherwise noted.

February 14, discussion on South Port & St Kilda Amalgamation, Casey Cardinia Mission & Ministry Funding, the PPEP congregation financial review based on the data collated and summarised for the period of 2017-2022 and the progress of working on the presbytery ministers' position descriptions.

March 14, preparation for the Presbytery in Council meeting, hearing Finance update on MFM work, resolving the Casey Cardinia Mission & Ministry Project proposals and approving the funding on the work of congregational consultations, hearing about the process of amalgamation of Black Rock and Cheltenham-Mentone congregations and having the members to complete the responsibilities and skills form.

April 11, recognition of amalgamation of Noble Park and Keysborough Samoan congregation and the amalgamation of Black Rock and Cheltenham-Mentone congregations, discussing about presbytery support for the congregations who had impact on the increase of insurance premium, planning to propose to host a presbytery event with Rev Dr Garry Deverell regarding the Uluru Statement from the Heart and Voice Referendum at Glen Waverley Uniting Church on Tuesday 30 May, hearing the future priority of MLDC projects to be Christian Practices of Discipleship and Multicultural project and Connecting Leaders project.

May 9, working on the Faithful Futures Questions and nominating Tom Spurling and Rev Sam Joo as the presbytery representatives for the task group, hearing updates on the Mission Grants 2023 process, resolved to appoint presbytery representatives to support Somers Camp, accepting PM Team's proposal to appoint Rev Robin Yang into a PM Supply position, discussion on the Casey Cardinia Project, preparing the Presbytery in Council meeting in June.

June 13, reflecting on the Uluru Statement from the Heart and Voice Referendum Conversation, having a discussion on the presbytery communication strategy by inviting Communications Officer Sarah Manse, updates on the Casey Cardinia project, planning Disability Action Plan conversation at the next Presbytery in Council meeting in June.

July 11, resolution on consolidation of the appointment of Rev Robin Yang working on the Casey Cardinia Project, hearing from JNC regarding the proposal for the PM-TL position, invited Nigel Hanscamp, Director of Priorities, Focus & Advocacy at eLM hearing about the Presbytery eLM minister role.

August 8, discussion on the Faithful Futures project, accepting documents of nominations for 2023 Standing Committee, discussion on the Responsibilities & Delegations document, PD for the presbytery ministers, Casey Cardinia project including regional ministry agent position and funding matter, project planning, discussion on the report to Synod 2023.

September 12, reflections on the Presbytery in Council meeting, appointed nominations committee 2023 Standing Committee, approval of Synod membership, hearing of Finance report and a comprehensive discussion on the work of the Pastoral Relations Committee, discussion on Money for Mission Funding, hearing updates on the Casey Cardinia project, approval of the proposal for Sandringham to be Reg. 3.9.3. congregation

October 10, discussion on the Finance report & budget for 2024, extensive discussion on the PPEP Strategy for Money for Mission, hearing about what had been happening in the Presbytery by David Higham, the PM-Supply, setting up presbytery meeting dates for 2024, introduction of Rev Dr Ji Zhang as the interim project leader for the Casey Cardinia project, hearing about the activities of MLDC including the information session with the new comers to the congregation leading to a pathway into ministry and be recognised as lay preachers in UCA, discussion on the nominating process of the Moderator.



Standing Committee Report (cont'd)

November 14, presentation about the Casey Cardinia Regional Ministry including reference group, the Presbytery standing group, the team of ministry agents, the steering committee by Ji Zhang, hearing from the JNC for Presbytery Minister Church Development position, discussions on the Presbytery communications, Act2 responses and preparing agenda for the next Presbytery in Council Meeting.

December 12, updates on the Casey-Cardinia project, reflections on the Synod Meeting and discussions on the 'unconfirmed resolutions from Synod meeting 2023', hearing from each committee chairs about their work of 2023 and plans for 2024, reviewing nominations for outside bodies of presbytery, planning for 2024, saying Au Revoir to Tom, James, Fiona and Ira.

Special Events



Inductions & Ordination

Duncan Macleod, Executive Officer eLM, 7 March

Kelly Skilton, Younger Generations – New & Digital eLM
7 March

Peter Rivett, Wesley College Elsternwick Campus 4, April

Chris Waddell, Glen Waverley Uniting Church, 15 October

Duncan Turuva, Ordained & inducted at Mt Waverley Uniting Church, 2 December

Sunny Chen, National Consultant, UCA Assembly, 7 December

Lisa Stewart, Southern Mornington Peninsula Uniting Church, 17 December

Release of Pastoral Ties

Chris Barnett Centre for Theology and Ministry, 21 March

Bruce Crowle, Narre Warren North Uniting Church, 27 August

Fiona Winn, Armadale Uniting Church, 1 October

Jay Robinson, Murrumbidgee Uniting Church, 26 November

Neil Peters, Glen Waverley Uniting Church, 17 December

Commissioning - Ministry of Pastor

David Higham, Seaford Uniting Church, 10 December

Admission – Ministry of the Word

Heeyoung Lim, Leighmoor Uniting Church, 12 November

Celebrating Amalgamation

St Kilda South Port Melbourne (now called St Kilda South Port), 5 March

Noble Park & Keysborough Samoan (now called Noble Park), 11 June

Black Rock & Cheltenham -Mentone (now called Charman), 9 July

Celebrating Ministry Milestones

50 Years

Rev Ronald Townsend

60 years

Rev John Donnell

Rev Richard Wootton

Rev Denham Grierson

Rev Bevin Fist

Rev Trevor Williams

Rev Brace Bateman

65 years

Rev Willaim Pugh

Rev Leon Henry Warren Clarnette

Mission, Leadership, Development Committee (MLDC)



1. Priority mission development
 - a. Continued support for the Casey-Cardinia as the project team has wrestled with making it an achievable project. MLDC focuses on missional aspects as it evolves.
 - b. The ideas behind the Connecting Leaders project informed the research into the missional activities of congregations and faith communities completed in November to show a snap shot of current missional activities.
 - c. Planning for Mission Catalyst projects and a Mission Roadshow was put off till next year.
2. Resourcing, training and coaching for congregational mission and community development
 - a. Supporting the Climate Action Network this year in their Arbor Day project, and encouraging the attainment of 5 Leaf Eco-Awards by congregations.
 - b. Investigating and supporting the leadership needs of culturally diverse congregations within PPEP, and connecting with intercultural activities across the Synod.
3. Lay leadership education and development
 - a. MLDC and the Ministry of Pastor team (PRC) continue to communicate about the recognition, formation and education of pastors and lay leaders.
 - b. Assessor training day was held in March. Further training will be undertaken with eLM next year. MLDC has continued supporting lay leaders and pastors completing required courses from eLM.
 - c. Representation on the Lay Preachers Association, by Ennis Macleod and then by Lay Preacher, Peter Woodbridge.
- d. Supporting our lay preacher candidate Sylvia Yang, to attend the National Conference in Brisbane, and assisting with Pathways to Ministry, and Introduction to the UCA information events.
- e. Training for other leaders in the church such as Church Council members, and youth and family workers was put on hold in 2023.
4. Provide resourcing and training for leaders on Christian discipleship
 - a. We recommend that the name of MLDC is changed to Mission, Leadership, Discipleship Committee to reflect the commitment to discipleship in congregations.
 - b. Developed a discipleship resource based around the Christian Spiritual Practice of Prayer for congregational use.
5. Annual Synod Grant Applications
 - a. MLDC recommended three grant applications to the Annual Synod Grant process, which were all approved.

Ennis Macleod
Chair MLDC



Communications Team

The Communication Team carries responsibility for the Presbytery's communication strategy, overseeing development and resourcing of the Presbytery's publications, website and digital media.

Members: Sarah Manase (Communications Officer), Jeff Gardner, Presbytery Minister Jay Robinson, Anne Kim, Presbytery Minister Anneke Oppewal.

Outcomes for 2023

In 2023 the Communication Team monitored and contributed to shaping of the monthly digital Newsbeat magazine, weekly regular email communication with office bearers and ministry agents, social media assets of the presbytery.

Newsbeat typically include a variety of content, such as:

- **PPEP News:** Announcements about new programs, services or initiatives
- **Synod News:** Updates on what is happening within the wider church and community
- **Thought Leadership:** Articles from ministers, chaplains, lectures and blogs on relevant monthly topics
- **Congregational member testimonies/ stories:** Case studies and testimonials from satisfied customers
- continued to develop the presbytery website and provide resources for leaders, stories, short 'think; pieces and essential information from the presbytery.
- assessed the effectiveness and future development of Newsbeat in 2023, including a survey of readers.
- surveyed congregations in relation to congregational communication strategy.

2024 Plan

- Continue to resource the Presbytery through the Presbytery website.
- Ensuring that every congregation's story is covered through the year.
- Learn from survey of congregation communication strategy
- Communicate with congregations whether it be via emails, phone calls, one-on-one meetings
- Resource congregations in the development and running of their websites, with the support of Synod's Communication team as needed
- Keep website and newsletter mobile-friendly. Since most emails will be read on a smartphone, we should continue to make sure are newsletters are mobile-friendly.

Our Key Strengths as a Communication Team are:

- Flexible and adaptable
- Respond to the situations as needed
- Open to new information that comes our way
- Endeavour to consider a wide range stories
- Take an easy-going approach to change

Sarah Manase

Communications Officer



Pastoral Relations Committee



Chair: James Douglas.

Members: Ian Menzies (minute secretary), Ineke Gyles, Semisi Tauili'i, Nigel McBrien, Belinda Clear, Robin Yang (deputy chairperson).

Staff support: Anneke Oppewal, Anne Kim.

The Pastoral Relations Committee's role is to support and oversee ministry placements and ministry agents (lay and ordained) within its bounds. The Committee works with placements (usually congregations) and ministry agents to provide care, facilitate calls and employment, advise on compliance, and where necessary assist with resolving conflicts. The Pastoral Relations Committee is strongly supported in fulfilling its responsibilities by the Presbytery Minister: Pastoral Care Anneke Oppewal and Presbytery Secretary Anne Kim. The Pastoral Relations Committee relies on the work of two teams: Ministry of Pastor Team and Ministry Formation Team.

2023 was a challenging year, with Duncan Macleod moving to eLM in January, and Craig Mitchell concluding his placement in August – the PRC is grateful for their work with congregations and the expertise they shared with us. Thankfully, the Presbytery and the PRC were ably supported by Robin Yang and David Higham in their supply PM roles through the year.

I want to take this opportunity to also thank the many members of the Presbytery who have served as Presbytery Liaison Persons on Joint Nominating Committees throughout the year, offering their time and talents in support of other congregations.

This is my final report as Chair of PRC, with Cameron McAdam taking on the role in 2024. The role has been a privilege as well as a challenge, and I am grateful for my time in the chair, and for the wonderful support I've received from the members of the Committee and the Presbytery team.

2023 Plan

- Appoint PLPs to work with congregational representatives from the Casey-Cardinia region to fill the Presbytery Placements
- Work with Synod to streamline long term supply arrangements.
- Trial new leave reporting system developed by Yarra Yarra Presbytery.

Outcomes in 2023:

- Presbytery Liaison Persons were appointed to each of the Presbytery Placements, along with Congregational representatives.
- Profiles and Position descriptions developed by Craig Mitchell were reviewed by PRC, then presented to and approved by the Standing Committee.
- The results of the trial of the Yarra Yarra Presbytery leave reporting system did not lead to its adoption in Port Phillip East.
- Through consultation with Synod, expectations around long-term supply have been clarified, enabling better supply arrangements in the Presbytery.
- Worked alongside the PM Pastoral in arranging and extending supply ministry, planning for changes to ministry time fractions or congregational structure, and responding to conflict between ministry agents and their placements. This complex work, which involves confidential issues, occupies a significant portion of the PRC's and the PM: Pastoral's time.

Pastoral Relations Committee (cont'd)

Plans for 2024:

- A renewed focus on Life and Witness Consultations, including developing training for the role of Presbytery Liaison Person.
- Exploring ways to build the capacity of Congregations to manage times of vacancy and to cover periods of leave of the ministry agent.
- Streamline the processing of routine forms such as long-term supply.

James Douglas

*Pastoral Relations
Committee Chairperson*



Ministry of Pastor Team

The Ministry of Pastor team continues to be represented on PRC and support PRC in its decisions around recognition of positions and pastors.

Over the year we have continued to liaise with congregations to help them create and fill Ministry of Pastor roles, assess position descriptions, assess potential candidates for these roles regarding the competencies they bring and are required to bring, coordinate with MLDC and Pilgrim College professional development and training for our pastors.

A constant challenge for the team has been the lack of knowledge congregations and ministry agents seem to have around Ministry of Pastor positions and the processes required to create them. We are continually speaking and promoting the Ministry of Pastor to the wider Presbytery and helping congregations as needed.

During 2023 there were 2 people who were recognised as in Ministry of Pastor roles, David Higham and Cathryn Peppiatt.

Rev Jay Robinson

Convenor - Ministry of Pastor Team

Ministry of Formation Team

Expression of thanks.

It was resolved that the Secretary would write to Lesley Armstrong expressing the gratitude of the group for Lesley's work as Secretary over two and a half years.

Current Period of Discernment

- Sharon Naidu... mentor Ineke Gyles.
- Laura Rose... mentor Sarah Tomlinson
- Niki Oostwoud – Mentor Sue Stott Believed to be ready to conclude POD this year
- Sarah Back – mentor Robin Yang.

Completed their POD

The Ministry Formation Team have resolved by consensus that the following people have satisfactorily Completed their Period of Discernment. The Presbytery should issue a certificate to these people.

- Tracie Mulia
- Nyok Gai - Nyok has been referred to the Pastor Task Group.

The following people have recently withdrawn from their POD.

- Ishe Mpakame
- Joe Rasolo

Current Candidate

Daniel Sihombing – mentor Cameron McAdam In 2024 will enter Exit Phase.

The Resignation of Rev Neil Peters

Neil indicated that he had written to PRC resigning as Convenor as of 15 December and seeking the help of PRC in finding a new Convenor.

Anneke expressed the sentiments of the group in thanking Neil for his years of service in this role – his hard work, his warmth, his care, his efficiency and his attention to detail. The group will indeed miss him .. but wishes him well in retirement.

Rev Neil Peters

*Convenor – Ministry of
Formation Team*



Casey Cardinia Regional Mission Project

We have seen significant progress with the Casey Cardinia regional mission project in 2023. After the resignation of Dr Craig Mitchell, I began in the role of project manager in June, as part of my Presbytery Minister supply position. Leadership responsibility for the project was subsequently given in October to Rev Dr Ji Zhang as the Casey Cardinia Interim Team Leader. This report will focus on key highlights for the project in 2023.

Oversight

The Presbytery Standing Committee established the Casey Cardinia Steering Committee, a representative oversight committee for the project. This comprised representatives from each congregation in the region (Berwick, Cranbourne, Endeavour Hills, Hampton Park, Narre Warren North and Pakenham), plus members of Presbytery. The committee had been chaired by Dr Tom Spurling, chairperson of the Presbytery. In addition, a Project Group, later to become known as the Reference Committee, was set up to support the Team Leader in building the project.

Direction & Priorities

After months of prayerful discernment Ji and the Reference Committee proposed a shift of direction and priorities. The shift can be summarized as follows.

1. The direction of the project is ***“To empower, enhance, support, resource, challenge, nurture, enable and equip local worshipping communities in their unique expressions of worship, witness and service.”***
2. Move from ministerial agents locally based working regionally, ***to a regionally based ministry team that work locally.***

3. The establishment of a ***regional council*** that would function alongside individual church councils in the area governance and oversight.

Regional Ministry Team

Work towards establishing a regionally based ministry team has begun. Jo Crisp was appointed to the region in September as 1.0 FTE Intergenerational Pastor working closely with Berwick and Pakenham congregations.

Niki Oostwoud will be joining the regional team in a 0.4 FTE position from 2024, primarily based on Hampton Park. Her PD is being finalized and is being finalised and is expected to be approved in the first quarter of 2024.

Ji facilitated gatherings of all ministerial agents across the region including ministers in placement, supply ministers, pastors, and retired ministers. These gatherings were opportunities for fellowship, team building, and sharing of the projects vision and direction.

Funding

I wish to acknowledge and show my appreciation to Trinity Brighton Uniting's generosity for their five year commitment to fund the project \$200,000 each year.

The project also received a synod grant to support the regional team in community engagement, particularly in the Casey area. The grant totaled \$30,000 per year.

This is in addition to the Presbytery's commitment of \$80,000 per year.



Casey Cardinia Regional Mission Project (Cont'd)

Conclusion

The Casey Cardinia regional mission project is an exciting leap of faith for the Presbytery, congregations, schools, local communities, and individuals. It must be acknowledged 2023 has not been an easy one, as the project faced some significant challenges in a time of transition and change. However, due to the hard work and support of so many, this regional initiative is beginning to take shape and the Holy Spirit is at work across the region.

I wish to take the opportunity to especially acknowledge and thank our Interim Team Leader, Rev Dr Ji Zhang for his leadership. His vision, commitment, wisdom, discernment, relentless drive and leadership has brought the project to where it stands today.

Supporting Ji was members of the Reference Committee (Rev Tony Floyd, Rev Ineke Gyles, Rev Dec Mat Harry, Ennis Macleod and Rev Jay Robinson). Their prayer discernment, experience and support has been critical.

I wish to thank our Presbytery leadership for their support including Dr Tom Spurling as chair, the Presbytery Ministry team and Presbytery committees and members of the Steering Committee.

Special thanks to Trinity Brighton for their generous financial support.

Finally, a huge thank you to all congregational members and leaders in the region including ministerial agents and church councils. Your ongoing commitment to the project has made everything possible. I look forward to the Spirit led journey ahead in 2024 and beyond.

Rev Robin Yang

*Presbytery Minister
Church Development*



Presbytery Event Photos in 2023



Property Committee

The Port Phillip East Presbytery (PPEP) Property Committee activity includes: the documentation and processing of property work in congregations;

1. advising congregations regarding property maintenance;
2. evaluating applications that may be proposed for, sale and purchase of property, property development and major renovation, the leasing of property;
3. manse standards, essential safety measures and occupational health and safety;
4. environmental impact of all the property from all PPEP congregations.

Chair: Gavin Faichney, Ian Cayzer (Secretary),

Members: Erica Fox, Greig Watts, Tony Lawman, Greg Fry.

Supply Presbytery Minister: David Higham

An on-going challenge for this Committee is to develop further membership. As with all church work the need for voluntary participation is very high and members' concept of their ability/willingness to contribute is correspondingly low – the Moses syndrome. The resignation of two of our members in 2022 and the departure of the PM Team Leader has meant that the work of this Committee is under severe stress.

Committee's Plans for 2023

Property Committee Plans for 2023 included:

- To obtain quotes for the renovations and maintenance requirements for the two Presbytery manses and arrange for the necessary work to be completed
- To follow-up on the implementation of Essential Safety Measures (ESMs) with all congregations;
- To issue a discussion paper focussing on property stewardship;
- To advise and assist with further MFMF sales and investment;
- To continue to encourage congregations to assess their environmental footprint and energy usage;

- To Cooperate with PM Church Development and the Mission and Leadership Development Committee (MLDC) about the future property needs of the Uniting Church within the Casey-Cardinia area;
- To examine the future property needs of the Uniting Church within the presbytery and explore the possibility of working with other denominations to establish a Christian Presence in areas of regional development.

Committee Outcomes achieved in 2023

Of the seven goals listed for implementation in 2023, unfortunately only four were realised fully. The other three were partially achieved and will need to have further attention in 2024.

1. With departure of two of our Presbytery Ministers, it became possible for the manses which they had been using to have some significant repair work completed. This caused a blow-out in the maintenance budget as some items required replacement, and additionally the necessary repairs were extensive. Following that work, it has been possible to have a temporary lease established for the Carnoustie Pde manse. This will contribute to the renovation costs.
2. A letter has been sent to all Church Councils regarding the need to establish a timely review of Essential Services Maintenance Schedule. This is a safety requirement by the State Government. Church Councils were also reminded of the need to provide a Property Report to the Annual General Meeting of the congregation. The PPEP Property Committee provided a template to undertake such an annual inspection and requested that a copy of the report be sent to the committee.
3. With the retirement of Elizabeth Adam, the Property Committee found it difficult to assist congregations wishing to divest unused property and invest in the MFMF. The committee Secretary and Chair continue to advise congregations considering this option.

PPEP Properties divested in 2023 included –

Ormond UC: 421 North Rd, Ormond. 3204. \$5,500,000. Settled February 28, 2023

Charman UC: Walter Meckiff Hall, 4 Eblana Ave, Mentone. 3194. \$2,750,000. Settled August 7, 2023

Property Committee (Cont'd)

Murrumbeena UC: 113 Murrumbeena Rd, Murrumbeena, 3163. \$1,000,030. Settled September 12, 2023.

Uniting by the Bay: Edithvale Church & Hall, 7 Edithvale Rd, Edithvale. 3196. \$2,500,000. Settled September 17, 2023.

PPEP Properties pending MFMF divestment include -

Keysborough site: 176 Chapel Rd, Keysborough. 3173.

Chadstone complex: Manse - 4 Edwards St, Chadstone. 3148.

- i. Church & Halls – 7/7A Edwards St, Chadstone. 3148.
- ii. Units 1-5 9 Burton St, Chadstone. 3148.

Gardiner Pre-School site: 10 St Andrew's Lane, Glen Iris. 3146.

Pakenham site: 45 James St, Pakenham. 3810.

- i. part of 92 Main St, Pakenham. 3810

Mt Waverley UC: Church & Halls, 482 High St Rd, Mt Waverley. 3149

4. With the departure of Presbytery Minister for Church Development, the Casey-Cardinia project stalled somewhat. However, with the appointment of Presbytery Minister – Supply, the Casey-Cardinia Regional Mission established a Project Team to plan and implement the proposed regional development and a Steering Committee to oversee the development. The PPEP Property Committee is represented on the Steering Committee and continues to work in conjunction with the Project team on property issues.
5. With 12 major development projects occurring within the Port Phillip East Presbytery, it was a concern for the Property Committee that delays in decision-making were frustrating both the congregations concerned, the PPEP Property Committee and Synod Property Services. These delays prompted the PPEP Property Committee to write to the Chair of the Synod Property and Operations. This resulted in a meeting with the Director of the Synod Property Services which prompted some action outcomes for some of the projects.

Committee's Plans for 2024

The following plans have been suggested for 2024;

1. Since both of the incoming Presbytery Ministers have their own residences, it is planned to lease both Lord Rodney Dve, Patterson Lakes and Carnoustie Pde, Heatherton, in order to provide a Manse Allowance for these Presbytery Ministers;
2. With the amalgamation of the Black Rock and Cheltenham congregations to form the Charman UC the question of the future use of the properties for which The Black Rock UC has responsible Body Status needs to be determined. This work needs to be undertaken with both the Finance Committee, the Pastoral Relations Committee and the Mission Liaison Committee. Both the Charman UC and the Beaumaris UC need to be supported through these discussions and decisions;
3. As a result of the Synod resolution regarding the increasing concern with the issue of Climate Change, to continue to encourage congregations to assess their environmental footprint and energy usage;
4. To continue to work with the Casey-Cardinia Steering Committee and the Project Team to advise on the appropriate use of church property within the region;
5. To encourage the Standing Committee to establish a policy on the church development across the presbytery so that decisions as to the allocation and use of property resources can be advised to our congregations;
6. To advise and assist with further MFMF sales and investment;
7. To examine the future property needs of the Uniting Church within the presbytery and explore the possibility of working with other denominations to establish a Christian Presence in areas of regional development.

Gavin Faichney

Chair Property Committee



Finance & Risk Committee

The Finance & Risk Committee is responsible for overseeing the Presbytery's budget and spending, gathering of information on mission and service giving, assessment of financial health of congregations and risk assessment and mitigation for the Presbytery.

Chair: Chris Begg Treasurer: Jeff Gardner

Members: Sue Lyons, Jenny Strahan, Jim Douglas, Tom Spurling PM-Supply: David Higham

2023 Plan

- Continue management of PPE budget and finances, including Chadstone POG and developing processes for management of the Casey-Cardinia regional project finances
- Reviewing ongoing M&S contributions and set implementing proposals for 2024
- Continue review of congregation finances to track and assist congregations where appropriate.
- In conjunction with other Presbytery committees continue the review and refinement of the Presbytery's risk management profile.
- Undertake training needs analysis for congregation treasurers and develop and provide the appropriate training.

Outcomes in 2023

- Regularly reported to Standing Committee the Presbytery financial position of actual receipts and expenditure compared to budget.
- Completed and had approved the 2024 budget
- Obtained approval from Standing Committee for major deviation from the budget where appropriate
- Reviewed congregation financials with respect to potential placements
- Reviewed congregation requests for use of Property Sale proceeds and Interest Only Mission Funds
- Continued managing the finances of the Chadstone Property Operations Group, including liaising with Melbourne Fijian Uniting Church, Uniting Agewell and other property users

- Established the level and followed actual payments for Synod Mission and Service contributions for each congregation for 2024. Discussions with Synod re preparing simple explanation of M&S usage continued.
- Tracked congregation responses to the Synod Online Financial survey and followed up with those not responding. PPE recorded the best response rate of any Presbytery
- Reviewed the results of the 2023 Online Survey with a view to identifying congregations that may be getting into financial difficulty
- Established accounts for the Casey-Cardinia project and commenced the establishment of the required management and reporting processes
- Continued the refinement of the Presbytery risk management profile

2024 Plan

- Continue management of PPE finances including regular reporting to Standing Committee
- Review 2024 income and expenditure as a key to developing the 2025 budget
- Continue management of Casey-Cardinia finances including reporting to the Steering Committee as required
- Review pre-placement financials, PSP and IOMF applications from congregations
- Continue management of Chadstone POG finances including regular reporting
- Reviewing ongoing M&S contributions from congregations and setting implementing proposals for 2025
- Continue review of congregation finances to track and assist congregations where appropriate.
- Continue the review and refinement of the Presbytery's risk management profile.
- Undertake training needs analysis for congregation treasurers and develop and provide the appropriate training.

A full copy of the Presbytery Financial Report is attached in the appendices.

Finance & Risk Committee (Cont'd)

We were very sad to hear of the unexpected passing of Jim Douglas in early January. Whilst only on the Finance & Risk Committee for a short period, his contribution and experience will be sorely missed. Our thoughts are with his family and friends.

Chris Begg, Chair

Jeff Gardner, Presbytery Treasurer



Presbytery Projects

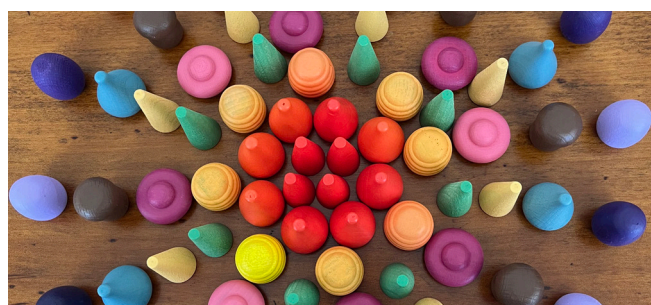
Ministry Wellbeing & Networking

As a Presbytery we continued building networks between ministry agents, leaders and congregations in the Presbytery. Some networks grow out of shared interests in ministry and mission, while others are based on geography and demographics. Some gather regularly through the year, some only meet on a more occasional or ad hoc basis. This creates opportunity for sharing of ideas, mutual support and care, and developing of mission and outreach initiatives and tap into the commonwealth of financial and people resources across our Presbytery as well as the wider Uniting and Ecumenical Church context.

Drop-in lunch with the Presbytery Ministry team

established closer relationship with ministry agents in the Presbytery by discussing, reflecting and wondering with the team for a time, sharing some inspiration about the ministries and worship they are involved in.

Workshop on Trauma & Change in Pastoral Care was held on 12 October on Zoom. The workshop was led by our Presbytery Minister Pastoral Anneke Oppewal who has 30+ years experience in pastoral care, a psychotherapist, and has received specialist training for working with people with PTSD and PTS, anxiety, depression, palliative care and bereavement. More than 30 people join the session.



One Day Retreat for ministry agents in our Presbytery was held on Thursday 26 October gathering in the Balnarring Uniting Church supported by the minister of Balnarring Nigel McBrian and 3 volunteers from the congregation. It was a great opportunity to enjoy nurturing worship, personal and shared reflection, conversations, a beach walk and a nourishing lunch. The PMs were asked to lead a retreat in Port Philip West on 24 November.



Regional Ministry Networks Anneke and David linked in with gatherings of Peninsula Ministers, and attended their next meeting on 19 October. Anneke and Robin linked in with a new initiative, started by Belinda Clear at Sandringham, for Ministers in the Bay side area on 17th October.

Supervision

Based on the results from the survey among ministry agents in regards to supervision as part of the Code of Ethics training in November 2022, PM Team could follow up people looking for a supervisor; approached supervisors and worked on an update of the booklet produced in 2020. Two supervision groups for retired ministers in active service had started to meet on a 6 weekly basis. This was a significant step forward to meeting requirements set by the Royal Commission.

Presbytery Projects (Cont'd)

Regional Collaboration - Casey Cardinia

The Casey Cardinia Retional Project can be found elsewhere in the report.

New Housing Estates Network

Craig Mitchell worked with other presbyteries collaborating on work involved in new housing estates. This work has stalled following Craig's departure.

Education and Training

Code of Ethics Training A catch-up session for Ministry Agents who missed the previous Code of Ethics session was held on 29 March.

The first round of Code of Ethics training about collegiality was held on 10th & 11th of May via online and a catch up session was held on 20th of September.

The second round of Code of Ethics training about the relationship to the Law was held on 8th and 9th of November.

Assessor Training for people to assist with Lay Preachers and Pastors was held by Anneke and Ennis on 15 May. Further work is planned to make sure the course is fully up to date and suitable for purpose.

Understanding the UCA the introductory course was held on Tuesday 5 December at Melbourne Fijian Uniting Church on 5 December 2023, which will run till March 2024. The course helps participants learn and better understand the ethos, heritage and polity of the UCA. A certificate of completion will be given to everyone who completes the assessments

PPE events and resources

Exploring Local Mission Craig Mitchell gave an interactive presentation on Community Engagement and Making New Connections in Mission at the March Presbytery in Council meeting.

Future Church & Act 2 Robin linked in with Jess Hateley Brown presented the ACT report to the Presbytery in Council on 19 August.

The Voice and Statement from the Hearts - an event on behalf of the presbytery in co-operation with the Victorian Council of Churches was held on Tuesday 30 May, 7.30-9.00pm at Glen Waverley UC. The speaker was Rev Dr Garry Deverell from the Indigenous Study Unit of the University of Divinity. Rev Sandy Boyce of VCC chaired the event, which was live-streamed.

Mission Studies

Preachfest Robin was invited to co-present a workshop with Tracia Mulia and Daniel Sihombing from 1 to 3 November.

Somers Camp

The PM team has facilitated Revs Ross Pearce and Claire Dawes to be the link people between the Presbytery and Somers Camp. Help has been requested from Somers for the Presbytery to help train Somers Leaders in Safe Church.



The Presbytery Team

